ABHINAVAGUPTA'S
Commentary on the
Bhagavad Gita

Gītartha Samgraha

Translated from Sanskrit
with Introduction and Notes by

Boris Marjanovic
Abhinavagupta, undoubtedly the greatest genius of India in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, poetics, dramaturgy, Tantra and mysticism, is being rediscovered only in the last few decades. Although several scholars, in India and abroad, are engaged in studying his works, it is surprising that there are still few translations available.

Abhinavagupta explains in his commentary that he undertook this work because he felt that his predecessors when commenting on the Bhagavad Gita had not understood its secret or esoteric meanings. With the main purpose to explain these esoteric meanings, Abhinavagupta elaborates the secret doctrine of the purification of the sense organs through the alternation of enjoyment of worldly objects and deep meditation. He claims that the continuous exchange of two contradictory experiences, i.e., gratification of the senses which brings satisfaction and samadhi in which sense organs are reduced to one’s own atman, quickly brings the highest good.

The great merit of the present translation of Abhinavagupta’s “summary of the (real and secret) meaning of the Bhagavad Gita” lies in the following: First, it includes the text and translation of the Kashmiri version of the Bhagavad Gita, which in places differs from the one commented upon by Shankara (there are fifteen additional verses, and many verses partially differ from the verses found in other recensions). Besides, it brings out the specific meanings in the context of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy and yoga, without being influenced by Samkhya or Vedanta. The translation and explanatory notes show a deep understanding of Kashmir Shaiva metaphysics and yoga.

The present work will fulfill an important role by presenting a different version of the Bhagavad Gita in the light of Kashmir Shaivism. It will also be inspiring for anyone interested in the practice of the secret yoga of the Gita.

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Gītārtha-saṃgraha

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Boris Marjanovic

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Pt. Hemendranath Chakravarti

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Bettina Bäumer
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Preface

Gitārtha-Saṅgraha, a little-known commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā is presented to the reader in English translation for the first time in India. Though Arvind Sharma translated the text in English earlier, his translation is incomplete and not widely available in India. Prabha Devi, a lady scholar closely associated with the revered Swami Lakshmanjoo of Srinagar, Kashmir, translated it into Hindi. Swami Lakshmanjoo had been immersed in the traditional lineage of Śaiva doctrine as it was in its heyday of vigour and success. Swami Lakshmanjoo was fully aware of its spiritual subtlety and philosophical excellence of thought. By the will of Śiva, the Divine, a tradition of Śaiva doctrine descended on earth and was fostered and nourished by numerous schools of the land. Lakshmanjoo belonged to this unbroken line of tradition and Prabha Devi, one of his favorite devotees received oral instruction from Swami-jee himself.

The Gītā commentary of Śrī Abhinavagupta was made available in Sanskrit, along with several other commentaries, by Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, many years before. In addition to that, Swami Lakshmanjoo also brought out another Sanskrit edition of Gitārtha-Saṅgraha from Chowkhamba Vidya Bhavan almost 70 years ago (1933), which has become very rare. It is a very happy and heartening occasion that Gitārtha-Saṅgraha, and its English translation, is now being published and will thus be made available for scholars and students.

There are many commentaries on the Bhagavad Gītā text. Most of them follow the tradition laid down by the great Śaṅkarācārya, with emphasis on non-duality and on Brahma, the only Truth. While Abhinava’s sole intention was on divinisation and transmutation of knowable objects into consciousness. This was done with the idea not to deny the divinity of the external world, but to accept everything existing in this world as being composed of consciousness.
When the Bhagavad Gītā is studied in the light of other commentaries, the seeker’s heart does not attain perfect fullness of satisfaction because here and there some hidden meanings remain out of sight; hence Śrī Abhinava states, “Though a good number of commentators interpreted the Bhagavad Gītā extensively, yet my effort is proper to bring into light the hidden meanings contained herein.” (Maṅgala verse 5)

One remarkable peculiarity of Śrī Abhinava’s style of writing was to include a condensed verse called sansāgraḥa after the completion of each chapter. The purpose of this verse was to help the reader understand the ideas expressed in that particular chapter. Abhinava gives the meaning of the word sansāgraḥa in a very interesting way. He writes:

Samyag gṛhyate — niscītyate 'neneti sansāgraḥa: — upāyah |
tenopāyena tatpadam abhidhāsyे — |
upāyāmaatra satatābhyāśasya vakṣe || (8:11)

“Sansāgraḥa means the means by which anything is determined. It is nothing but a means. I shall tell about that state by means of this upāya. In this context, I shall talk about the means for continuous practice.”

Śrī Abhinava used to add sansāgraḥa verses in most of his compositions, like Tantrasāra, Dhanvālakalocana and Abhinavabhārati. The role of which is to bring a compact unity among all the statements. In one of his sansāgraḥa verses in Gitārtha-saṁgraha we find the glorious view of the all-inclusive immanence of the Lord Divine; when realised the aspirant experiences that there is no such state, either within or without, where He does not shine. (chapter 8:11)

The Kashmiri recension of the Bhagavad Gītā is different at many places from other Gītā recensions. Before Abhinavagupta, Rāmakāṇṭha commented on the Bhagavad Gītā elaborately, emphasizing the importance of jñāna-karma-samuccayavāda, the doctrine which gives equal importance to both knowledge and action. For Śrī Abhinava also knowledge and action are not two different things. He writes: “The Lord who is consciousness — whose supreme nature is light, bliss and freedom — expresses Himself in the entire series of creation, maintenance and dissolution. Even then, He does not lose anything as a result of this expansion — it is nothing but the state of agent, apart from which there is no question of doership. In the absence of that what are these actions? This being absent, with whom would be the result? Here the word karmā means action and the result indeed is the result of action. For example, the movement of the stick and the wheel of the potter is not different from the very nature of the potter, and the action is not created by the jar for it (the action) is included in consciousness. Therefore, the conscious Lord indeed shines in different forms. Therefore, the existence of actions and their results as separated from the Divine is untenable. The Lord Himself shines as consciousness with his aspects as knowledge (dhr) and action (kriyā). Action and knowledge are not two distinct entities, but combined create a whole. (5:14)

Abhinavagupta was a great genius not only in the sphere of Śaivism, but was through and through a saintly soul bearing a very keen insight which had reached the heart of truth. Whatever he touched turned into gold, whether it was a commentary on the Dhanvaloka of Ānandavardhana or a commentary on the Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata. He became an accomplished scholar of eminence and rose to the height of Sadguru, the real guru leading seekers to attain the beatitude of the Divine.

His works are many, and among them Gitārtha-Saṁgraha is an important one. Many scholars are not well acquainted with the beauty and flavour of the Gitārtha-Saṁgraha. Therefore, it is a very happy occasion that Boris Marjanovic has taken upon himself the job of translating this text with right earnestness in order to focus to the point what he has found in Śrī Abhinava’s composition, maintaining unity of thought (ekavākyatā) from the beginning to the end. I thank him for his strenuous effort and hope that the Great Divine may bring success in his life.

Pandit Hemendranath Chakravarti
FOREWORD

Abhinavagupta, undoubtedly the greatest genius of India in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, poetics, dramaturgy, Tantra and mysticism, is being rediscovered only in the last few decades. Although several scholars, in India and abroad, are engaged in studying his works, it is surprising that there are still few translations available. Important texts still await a thorough study and translation. In this situation, the present work by Boris Marjanovic is a welcome step to fill this gap and to make available to a wider readership an important text: Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā.

Besides a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit and Indian philosophy, the study and translation of Abhinavagupta’s texts requires another qualification to understand their real meaning: an initiation into and practice of the spiritual tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. Abhinavagupta himself stresses this point time and again, and his great reverence and indebtedness to his teachers as well as his graceful attitude to his disciples for whom he is writing shows the importance of the continuity of the mystical lineage.

As a Śaiva, Abhinavagupta was not obliged to write commentaries on the prasthānatraya as Vedāntins did: Upaniṣads, Bhagavad Gītā and Brahma Sūtra. Though he quotes some Upaniṣadic passages here and there in his works, he does not elaborate anywhere on the Upaniṣads. What then prompted him to write a commentary, or rather a summary of the essential meaning of the Bhagavad Gītā? He himself gives sufficient reasons in this very commentary of his purpose, his intention and his unique understanding of this popular text. Inspired by his teachers, particularly Bhūṭirāja, and requested by his disciples, especially Loṭaka (see summary verses of this book

1 To mention especially the Italian translation of the Tantrālōka by R. Gnoli, the French translation of some chapters of Tantrālōka by L. Silburn and A. Padoux, the English translation of Parātrīśikā Vivaraṇa by Jaideva Singh, and the German translation of Tantrasāra and Stotras by B. Bäumer.

at the end of chapter 18), Abhinavagupta explains that his predecessors who commented on the Bhagavad Gītā did not understand its secret or esoteric meaning (tadvādāśā-prakāśanamātra... 18,2). He does not want to repeat the interpretations of his predecessors, such as Bhāṭṭa Bāhākara, and does not comment on the verses where the meaning of the text is obvious. For this very reason, he did not comment on each and every verse of the Gītā’s text. He is concerned with the essence of the teaching (cp. 18,63), which is supreme non-duality (paramādvaita), and which can neither be satisfactorily explained by the dry philosophical system of Sāṅkhya (18,67), nor Vedānta. He clearly states in his interpretation of 18,63 that the knowledge taught by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna is more esoteric than Vedānta (guhyāt-vedāntādapi guhyam). It is because the author was concerned with the essence of the Gītā and not with its commonly understood meaning that the commentary is called arthasaṃgraha, and neither bhāṣya nor āṭkā.

But what is this esoteric meaning? To give only a few examples: When in chapter 4 a kind of prāṇaḥdaṇm is taught, and it is said that prāṇa is offered into āpāna, and also āpāna is offered into prāṇa (verses 29-30), Abhinavagupta does not only give the yogic interpretation, where prāṇa in the form of primordial sound (nāda) is rising through the subtle centers of the yogic body, but he also gives a secret practice of initiation, where the āpāna (inhaling breath) of the disciple is made to enter the prāṇa (exhaling breath) of the guru. In this process, both guru and disciple attain liberation. Similarly, the different kinds of sacrifice are explained as an offering into the fire of one-pointedness, which is also interpreted in the light of a practice described in the Viṣṇu Bhairava: “This fire of one-pointedness, which is insatiated, is lit by right knowledge. The purport is that they grasp objects either (really) enjoyed or imagined by a one-pointed mind, while at the same time they turn away from all other objects.” (4:27-28). By these esoteric interpretations in the light of Kashmir Shaivism, the Gītā reveals a new dimension of spiritual practice or yoga.

The great merit of the present translation of Abhinavagupta’s “Summary of the (real and secret) meaning of the Bhagavad Gītā” lies in the following: First, it includes the text and translation of the
Kashmiri version of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, which at places differs from the one commented upon by Śaṅkara. Besides, it brings out the specific meanings in the context of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy and Yoga, without being influenced by Sârîkhya or Vedânta. The translation and explanatory notes show a deep understanding of Kashmir Shaiva metaphysics and Yoga, thus standing out in contrast to an earlier translation by Arvind Sharma. Arvind Sharma's study and translation lacks an understanding of Kashmir Shaivism and therefore often misses the point. For example, A. Sharma's translation of the same commentary (4:29-32) is confused and uncertain, because the traditional approach of Trika yoga is lacking. However, since Abhinavagupta himself has stated that it is not useful to point out the mistakes of other scholars, I am not attempting a comparison between the two translations.

Abhinavagupta reveals the implications of the secret teachings of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, which he calls a “great medicine”:

“Here I will stop revealing this secret because of the fear of saying too much and clearly revealing this secret. Although this verse (4,31) contains the highest secret, it can still be revealed to those whose elements are balanced by means of the great medicine in the form of tradition handed down by respected teachers when pleased by the service and deep devotion of their disciples.”

In the same context he proceeds: “In regard to this verse, other commentators have offered different commentaries. Their explanations and the explanation of my teachers should be analyzed by good-hearted scholars. What could be accomplished by pointing out the mistakes of others? ” (page 126)

The present work will fulfill an important role because it presents an original interpretation of the Bhagavad Gîtâ in the light of Kashmir Shaivism. It will also be inspiring for anyone interested in the practice of the secret yoga of the Gîtâ.

Bettina Bäumer
Varanasi, 10th January 2002

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Prof. Shri Narayana Mishra and Pandit Hemendranath Chakravarti with whom I read this and many other texts. Prof. Mishra is a scholar of the highest caliber and a dedicated teacher. His unique ability to express abstruse śaśtric ideas in a perfectly clear manner and his giving heart as a teacher leave no question unanswered. Pandit Chakravarti possesses deep insight into the secrets of Kashmir Shaivism and Tantras in general. His knowledge and his emphasis on the spiritual aspect of Kashmir Shaivism have had a profound impact on me. I can only hope that the forces who govern human destinies will keep me close to these two great scholars. I also want to offer special thanks to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who helped me to get established on the path of knowledge and enabled me to have sufficient experience to read and understand books of this kind. I owe a special thanks to Prof. Bettina Bäumer for taking time out of her busy schedule to read this translation and offer her advise and suggestions. I also owe acknowledgment to Álvaro Enterría of Indica Books for his encouragement, help, and his decision to publish this book. Finally I want to express appreciation to my wife Kyung-Hwa Ro for her support and understanding for what I chose to do.
INTRODUCTION

The study of Sanskrit and Indian Philosophy has been a lifelong aspiration for me. From the very beginning, I attempted to give the same importance to both intellectual understanding and the experience that comes as the result of practice.

Ever since I 'discovered' Abhinavagupta as a graduate student at the University of Iowa, I felt an urge to understand, absorb and internalize his teachings. I was attracted by the lucidity and subtlety of his thought. His ability to clearly and in few words bring to the point all the depth of the spiritual experience is unsurpassed. His words made the innermost core of my being stir in its attempt to recognize itself. However, from the outset I was faced with the difficulties in studying Abhinavagupta and Kashmir Shaiva philosophy as a whole.

First of all, most of Abhinavagupta's works remain untranslated, and reading the original texts requires much more than a knowledge of Sanskrit. It requires knowledge of the basics of all the six systems of Indian philosophy, Buddhism, Tantra, etc. Second, Abhinavagupta's writings are large and extraordinarily complex; therefore their comprehension is not only dependent on the intellectual understanding of the philosophical system, but also on the experience which comes as a result of the practice of Yoga. Abhinavagupta makes this point clear in most of his writings. Here in Gitārtha-saṅgṛaha he writes:

These two paths can be known by adopting the practice of internal yoga. This is not the place however, to go on explaining this point in detail, as this would greatly increase the volume of this book. It is enough to say that all the external divisions of time belong to the sphere of internal time (ābhyantara kāla). In order to understand this one needs to practice yoga. (8:27)
I first came to Varanasi in 1996. At that time, I familiarized myself with the city and also started taking Sanskrit classes with teachers who emphasized the traditional method of teaching. It was then that I realized the vast opportunities found in this city for anyone interested in studying Indian philosophy or Sanskrit. Immediately after that experience, I moved to Varanasi and immersed myself in study of the śāstras with the great pandits of this ancient city of learning. This book is the product of that study and is meant for both scholars and spiritual seekers alike. My sincere hope is that this translation will help those interested in the subject get a clearer understanding of the Gītā text as well as Abhinavagupta as a scholar and yogin.

The text of Gītārtha-Saṅgrahā

At the outset I want to point out that this translation of the Gītā text will differ in places from other English translations. The reason for this is that the Kashmiri recension of the Bhagavad Gītā used by Abhinavagupta in his commentary differs from other available recensions. First of all, the Kashmiri recension contains fifteen additional verses. Some of the more interesting additional verses can be found in Chapter 2, verses 11 and 50, and in Chapter 3, verses 38-42. In addition to that, a great number of verses found in the Kashmiri recension partly differ from the vulgate or the critical editions. The reader is advised to pay close attention to these differences, as sometimes they significantly alter the meaning of the entire verse. Furthermore, in my translation of the Gītā verses, I closely followed Abhinavagupta’s commentary and the meanings that he assigned to different words and expressions. Therefore, my English translation will at places be significantly different from other English translations, even when the Sanskrit text is identical in both recensions.

In his book ABHINAVAGUPTA (p. 60), K.C. Pandey rightly points out that the reader of this commentary should be familiar with at least some of the main principles of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy in order to follow the ideas presented by Abhinavagupta. The following pages are meant for the easier understanding of those unfamiliar with the Kashmir Shaiva philosophical system.

Introduction

IMPORTANT KASHMIR SHAIVA PRINCIPLES FOUND IN ABHINAVAGUPTA’S COMMENTARY ON THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

The nature of the highest reality in Kashmir Shaivism

According to Kashmir Shaivism, the highest reality is prakāśavimarsṭamaya. The light (prakāśa) aspect of the highest reality is the pure light of consciousness, which is beyond creation. However, at the same time, prakāśa is present on each and every level of the manifested creation. Vimarśa is the consciousness, the self-awareness of that light through which it remains aware of itself on every level of its creation. For her existence, vimarśa is not dependent on anything outside of herself. Therefore, she possesses absolute freedom, and in this respect she is also referred to as svātantrya. In the process of expansion of consciousness, i.e. creation, vimarśa gives rise to icchā, jñāna and kriyāśaktis, which in turn bring creation into existence. Therefore, according to Kashmir Shaivism this universe is real and not an illusion as thought by Advaita Vedānta. This is one of the main differences between Kashmir Shaivism and Advaita Vedānta. Swami Lakshmanjoo explains the difference between the two systems:

Vedānta holds that this universe is untrue, unreal. It does not really exist. It is only the creation of illusion (māyā). Concerning this point Kashmir Shaivism argues that if Lord Śiva is real then how could an unreal substance come out from something that is real. If Lord Śiva is real then His creation is also real. Why should it be said that Lord Śiva is real and His creation is an illusion (māyā)? Kashmir Shaivism explains that the existence of this universe is just as real as the existence of Lord Śiva. As such it is true, real, pure, and solid. There is nothing at all about it which is unreal. (Kashmir Shaivism: The Secret Supreme, p. 106)

The process of creation

According to Kashmir Shaivism, the creation of the universe is the external reflection of everything that already exists in the consciousness of Śiva. Swami Lakshmanjoo describes the process of reflection in the following way:
In the ordinary worldly course sound is reflected outwardly in ether and inwardly in the ear. Touch is reflected outwardly in air and inwardly in the skin. Form is reflected outwardly in fire and in a mirror and inwardly in the eye. Taste is reflected outwardly in water and inwardly in the tongue. Smell is reflected outwardly in the earth and inwardly in the nose. These reflections, however, are just like the reflection in a mirror. They only take place individually. All five reflections are not available at one, only one thing is reflected in each. In a mirror form is reflected. Touch cannot be reflected in a mirror nor can taste, smell, or sound. A mirror will only reflect form. It is only in Supreme God-Consciousness that you find all five reflected at once. In fact, although these reflections are experienced individually in all of the organs, sight in the eye, sound in the ear, etc., these reflections could not even be observed if consciousness were not there. Awareness is needed and this is found in consciousness and not in the organs.

The universe, therefore, is reflected in the mirror of consciousness, not in the organs nor in the five gross elements. These are merely tattvas and cannot reflect anything. The real reflector is consciousness. In consciousness, however, you see only the reflected thing and not anything that is reflected. That which is reflected (bimba) is in fact svātantrya. This whole universe is the reflection in God-Consciousness of svātantrya. There is no additional class of similar objects existing outside of this world that He reflects in His nature. The outside element, that which is reflected, is only svātantrya. The infinite variety, which is created, is only the expansion of svātantrya.

(Kashmir Shaivism: The Secret Supreme, p. 29-30)

**The theory of causation (kāryakāraṇabhāva)**

In Indian philosophy there are mainly two theories of causation, sadkāryavāda advocated by the followers of Sāṃkhya and asadkāryavāda advocated by the followers of Nyāya. The core of the argument between the two schools is, whether the effect before its creation is of the nature of existence or non-existence. In other words, whether effect inherently exists in its cause (sadkāryavāda) or whether it comes into being from non-existence (asadkāryavāda).

Broadly speaking, the Kashmir Shaiva position on this particular issue seemingly coincides with Sāṃkhya’s position. This is because according to Kashmir Shaivism, effects, i.e., the entire universe, even before its creation already exists in its unmanifested form in the consciousness of the creator. However, there are major differences between the two schools. Šaiva thinkers find two major faults in Sāṃkhya’s theory. The first is that cause and effect, which according to Sāṃkhya exist in the relationship of identity-cum-difference (tadātmya), cannot be logically justified. This is because the cause and effect, i.e., the seed and a tree cannot exist at the same time. The second fault is that Sāṃkhya cannot explain how effects come into existence from Prakṛti, which according to them is insentient (jāda). Therefore, Šaiva thinkers put forward their own theory. They argue that the entire creation is the manifestation of the absolute consciousness stirred into motion by icchāsakti, i.e., the divine will of the creator. Thus, when a potter creates a pot, it is that same icchāsakti, which is identical with consciousness, that operates through the potter, who is also part of the same consciousness. Furthermore, it is that same consciousness that is found to be the ultimate source of both instruments used in the production of a pot as well as the material used in its creation. Therefore, according to this system, both cause and effect are ultimately the effects of the highest consciousness, who is the ultimate cause.

**Jñāna-karma-samuccayavāda**

According to Advaita Vedānta, action (kriyā) is a sign of imperfection and therefore cannot be present in the highest reality. Living beings, lacking perfection, perform action only when they have a need to gain or accomplish something. However, the lack of anything in any respect cannot under any circumstances be
present in the highest reality. Therefore, Advaita Vedántins assign a dominant role to knowledge over action. On the other hand, the Kashmir Śaiva philosophers maintain that the activity (kriyā) of Shiva is his very nature and the result of his absolute freedom (svātāntryaśakti). This is because action on the part of Śiva is not directed toward anything or anybody, as it is not aimed at the results of actions (5:14). Therefore, following his predecessors, Abhinavagupta in his commentary also points out that Gītā teaches jñāna-karma-sammuccaya.

Pandit Chakravarti, in his preface to this book, has already stated that Abhinavagupta gives equal importance to action and knowledge. This is because both action and knowledge are different aspects of the same consciousness and can never, on any level of creation, be separated from each other. In order to support this view, Pandit Chakravarti quoted the portion of Abhinavagupta’s commentary on verse 14 of chapter 5.

However, in the introduction to his translation of Abhinavagupta’s commentary, A. Sharma insists that Abhinavagupta criticizes the theory of jñāna-karma-sammuccaya. To support this view A. Sharma refers to Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the first verse of chapter one. This passage, in his translation, reads as follows:

When it is said that knowledge is primary and works should be abandoned or that works grounded in knowledge are not a hindrance to mokṣa, the intention is that knowledge is predominant and works no hindrance, not that knowledge and works should be conjoined on an equal footing.

However, it seems to me that if this passage * is carefully read, its purpose is not to deny the theory of jñāna-karma-sammuccaya, but to emphasize that one should perform action while being established in knowledge. This is because only the action performed by a yogin established in knowledge is not instrumental in binding. Abhinavagupta once again makes this point clear in 2: 52 and 3: 2.

* See my translation of the same passage, p. 28

"The last moment" and leaving of one’s body

At several places in his commentary (8: 5, 6, 7 and 8: 14, 26, 27), Abhinavagupta gives a lengthy elaboration on the characteristics of “the last moment”, i.e., the moment when the departing soul is leaving the body.

At the outset, Abhinavagupta points out that whatever object one had meditated on (throughout one’s life), that very object he attains at the time of leaving his body. However, a significant departure from most of the other commentators is that, according to Abhinavagupta, it is not necessary for one to remember his desired object at the very last moment of leaving his body. For example, a yogin who has meditated on God throughout his life attains the highest reality whether he remembers God, at the last moment, or not. The reason for this is that the meditation on God, etc., (throughout one’s life) creates a strong impression, which at the last moment blocks the influence of other less powerful impressions and enable him to attain God, etc. The same will happen to one who dies prematurely, as a result of accident, etc. Such a person will also attain his desired object, i.e. what he had been meditating on throughout his life. Abhinavagupta describes the last moment in the following way:

That very moment of giving up one’s body — which cannot be perceived by others, such as relatives, which takes place immediately after actions such as heavy breathing, coughing and the hair standing on its ends because of limbs losing their power — is devoid of experiences such as happiness, sorrow or delusion normally caused by the body.

At this point Abhinavagupta raises and himself answers the following questions: What will happen, if at the time of death one remembers his son, wife, other relatives or the cold water that he used to drink? Does this mean that he will attain identity with his wife, etc.? The answer that Abhinavagupta gives is that if anybody can still remember his wife, son, etc. then he is certainly still present in his body. What then happens at that very last moment? Abhinavagupta explains:
At that very last moment (one who had been remembering God throughout his life) will remember God as a result of the impression created through continuous meditation and will become united with Parameśvara. This is because he becomes free from the binding influence of time. (8: 5/6/7)

**Some important characteristics of a yogin as described in the Gītā and commented on by Abhinavagupta**

A yogin who has not attained perfection and is still engaged in practice is called a tapasvin. Although a tapasvin is free from attachment to external objects, he is still mentally attached to them (2: 61). In other words, his mind, as a result of desires, is still overwhelmed by the experience of the objects. Therefore, the task ahead of him is to conquer his mind. (2: 62)

Abhinavagupta’s advise to the tapasvin is not to withdraw from the world but to enjoy the objects of the senses while at the same time continuing the practice of deep meditation. The senses in this context represent gods that need to be pleased and which when purified lead one to liberation (4: 34). Abhinavagupta writes:

Thus, continuous exchange of two contradictory experiences, i.e. gratification of the senses, which brings satisfaction, and samadhi, in which sense organs are reduced to one’s own atman, quickly bring the highest good. This is because these two experiences are mutually helpful. (3:11)

Furthermore, a yogin does not engage in worldly activities in order to gain profit but surrenders the fruits of his actions to God. He remains engaged in the world because this is the nature of the senses. However, a yogin is aware that the senses are not his real nature and therefore, they do not create waves of anger in him (2: 72). Such a yogin realizes:

“How can I (who am identical with the atman) be affected by the sense organs, even at the time when they are engaged in experiencing their respective objects? How can actions performed by the sense organs, which are entirely different from my own self, affect me who am identical with the atman?” This realization is technically called surrendering actions to the Brahman (5: 10).

However, Abhinavagupta makes clear that surrendering everything to God is possible only when one attains identity with God through meditation. Otherwise, “How can one surrender the fruits of action to God, if God’s nature remains hidden from him?” (12: 12)

As a result of such continuous practice a yogin is able to block impressions normally gained through the contact with the outside world (5: 27). Finally, he becomes so perfect in his practice that he is able to discard the impressions at the very same time that he is engaged in experiencing objects (11: 18).

A fully realized yogin is free from attachment because of the experience of the highest reality (2: 71). Furthermore, he is always and in all states of consciousness established in samadhi (turyātita). (5: 26)

As a result of this experience a yogin perceives all beings as part of the divine (5: 19). In addition to that, for such a yogin, the division of people into friends, enemies, etc., appears only externally, while internally he is permanently established in Brahman (5: 20). Ultimately he does not see a difference between himself and other living beings (6: 7). In his daily activities the actions of a realized yogin are seemingly identical to the actions of ordinary people. Nevertheless, there are major differences. Abhinavagupta writes:

A fully realized yogin does not think in his mind, “I will gain merit by serving a brāhmaṇa. He does not believe that a cow is purifying nor is he entertaining the thought that possessing an elephant will bring him wealth. The yogin does not believe that a dog is impure and that it might harm him. In the mind of such a yogin even the untouchable is not impure and sinful. He looks at all living beings as being equal. However, he does not necessarily act in this way.” (5: 19)
The yogin does not act according to his insight because he follows the rules of the society in which he lives. According to Abhinavagupta, the sole purpose for such a yogin is "education people. Furthermore, if one who has already attained perfection would not perform any act, then chaos would prevail in the society. This is because people would not follow the well-established path would be shaken."

written by the great Śaiva ācārya

Abhinavagupta

with the Commentary called

Gitārtha-saṅgraha

Śrī Bhagavad Gītā
Maṅgala¹ Verses:

1. That Śiva — who in the process of unfolding (of the universe) spreads in all directions, first assumes the nature of various objects (and) then becomes objects mutually distinct from each other, thus, attaining the property of being the objects of experience; then again (in reverse), under the influence of one-pointed meditation he once again reaches the state beyond differentiation — that Śambhu, the destroyer of inauspiciousness, the storehouse of illuminating consciousness, is (always) victorious.

2. That śāstra², which contains a hundred thousand verses, composed by the sage Dvaipāyana, has declared mokṣa as its highest goal. But in that same śāstra other dharmas are also discussed for the purpose of nourishing that mokṣa.

¹ Maṅgala verses are found in most of the major texts written in classical Sanskrit. The writing of these verses was thought to be an auspicious act, written for the purpose of successful and unobstructed completion of the work undertaken. Most maṅgala verses are invocations to a particular god or praise of one’s teacher.

² The word śāstra refers to any religious or scientific treatise as well as to a sacred text considered to be divine revelation. In this verse, the word śāstra refers to the Mahābhārata.
3. Stating briefly, mokṣa is merging with Lord Śiva, with whom everything is identical, whose nature is purity, who is the doer of all actions, omniscient, free from desire and permanently manifest.

4. Although in other parts of the Mahābhārata mokṣa is also discussed, nevertheless the verses of the Gitā are uniquely capable of granting mokṣa.

5. Although the verses of the Gitā have been commented on in great detail by other commentators, nevertheless, my attempt is not unjustified, as I intend to bring to light their esoteric meaning.

6. Having received traditional teaching from Bhaṭṭendurāja and after contemplating the text for a long time, I Abhinavagupta composed this commentary called the Gitārthasaṁgraha.
dealing with the conflict between the gods, which are the products of knowledge, and demons, which are the products of ignorance.

At this point, it is important to emphasize that knowledge and action are not equal and therefore, cannot be placed on the same level. On the path of liberation, knowledge plays a dominant role while action should be discarded. It is because of this superiority of knowledge that the action of even those who are fully engaged in daily activities is not instrumental in binding. Therefore, there is no invariable concomitance between knowledge and action.

In this regard, I will explain the genuine intention of the sage Vyāsa at different places throughout my commentary. What purpose could be served by continuing the discussion on this particular topic? Talking too much only creates obstacles on the path of realization of the highest reality.

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3 The superiority of knowledge over action is that action can be abandoned only through knowledge. The relationship between knowledge and action in the light of Kashmir Shaivism has been simply but clearly explained by Swami Lakshmanjoo. He writes: “Creation and destruction also take place together. In this way there is creation and destruction in the cycle of action, and creation and destruction in the cycle of knowledge. Creation and destruction in the cycle of action is just what takes place in the world of ignorance. For instance, there is a mountain. It is created and it exists in the realm of action. The results of this action are that after one thousand centuries this mountain will become dust. It will fall and crumble. This is creation and destruction in the cycle of action. Now, you have to transform this action, the activity of this created thing, into knowledge. Then action will become universal. In that universality there is knowledge, pure knowledge (pūrṇa-jñāna). So, in this creation and destruction, when action is created, knowledge is destroyed, and when knowledge is created, action is destroyed. For instance, I perceive a mountain, it is an action. It is gradually crumbling into dust. If I perceive it in knowledge, the knowledge of God Consciousness will transform this perception making it universal, and I will not feel that it is in action. The reason being that after one thousand centuries, this mountain will become dust. I will feel that it has taken the formation of dust. I will not feel that it is destroyed. So it was not in action, it was in knowledge. In universality rock is God and dust is also God.” (John Hughes (ed.): Self-realization in Kashmir Shaivism, p. 28).

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Dhūtarāṣṭra said:

1. When my army and the army of the Pāṇḍavas assembled on the field of dharma, on the field of the Kuru, the meeting place of all kṣatriyas, what did these two armies do, O Sañjaya?

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In regard to this verse, some commentators have explained the word kuru to mean both external and internal sense organs. ‘Field’ (ksetra) is that which enables sense organs to operate. The word ksetra in the expression dharmaksetra refers to a field in which both worldly dharmas, as well as supreme dharmas come into existence. As it is said in Yajñavalkya Smriti:

This is the highest dharma, which consists of the realization of ātman by means of yoga.

Therefore, in this context the word ksetra means body. As a protector of both of these dharmas, ‘the body’ (ksetra) is entitled to liberation. When all dharmas are destroyed, then mokṣa is attained. If, however, the word ksetra is derived from the root kṣad, meaning to
attack, to confront, then the body is the meeting place (samāgama) of mutually contradicting feelings such as, passion and dispassion, anger and tolerance, etc. They exist (in the body) in a relationship of destroyer and that which is to be destroyed.

Kṣatriyas who have gathered on this field (possessing these contradicting feelings) for the very purpose of destroying and being destroyed are of the nature of knowledge and ignorance. The Kauravas, being dominated by impure desires, represent ignorance, while the Pāṇḍavas, who are of the nature of pure knowledge, represent knowledge itself. What did these kṣatriyas do on the battlefield? Between these two opposing groups, who are the defeated ones and who are the victorious? This is the meaning of the question asked by the king Dhrītarāṣṭra.

The Kauravas, who continuously repeat the words, “this is mine, this is mine” (māmaka), and who act closely following the desires of their bodies, are the ignorant ones. The Pāṇḍavas, on the other hand, are pure because they are free from that feeling.

4. Heroes and mighty archers are present here, all equal to Bhima and Arjuna on the battlefield, Yuyudhāna and Virāṭa and the great warrior Drupada.

5. Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitānas and the valorous king of Kāśī Purujit, Kuntibhoja and Shaibya, bull among men.

6. The powerful Yuddhāmanyu, the valorous Uttamausjas, the son of Subhadrā and also the sons of Draupadi, all certainly great warriors.

7. Know, O Best of Twice-borns, those who are distinguished among us. I will name for your information the leaders of my army.

8. In this great army, all the chiefs are great warriors. Yourself and Bhīṣma and Karnā and Krpa, king Śalya, Jayadratha, Asvatthāmā and Vikarṇa, as well as the son of Somadatta.
9. And many other heroes, all prepared to sacrifice their lives for me; all are armed with various weapons and skilled in many arts of warfare.

In the next verse, Duryodhana will give us the reason behind listing the names of the leaders of the two opposing armies.

10. The army led by Bhīma is inferior in strength to that of ours; on the other hand, our army led by Bhīṣma is superior to that of our opponents.

The army belonging to the Pāṇḍavas and led by Bhīmasena is insufficient, i.e., it is not capable of defeating Duryodhana’s army on the battlefield. The word insufficient here means small or limited. Duryodhana wants to say that in comparison with his army, the army of the Pāṇḍavas is small in number, and therefore cannot match his.

On the other hand, his army led by Bhīṣma is sufficient, i.e., big in size, and as such it is capable of defeating the army of the Pāṇḍavas. In Duryodhana’s mind, if indeed the army is sufficient, which means that it is larger than the army of the opponent, then it cannot be defeated on the battlefield.

Therefore, each stationed on his respective place, on all fronts, all of you, support Bhīṣma alone.
17. The king of Kaśi, the greatest archer, and Śikandi, the great warrior, Dhrṣṭadyumna, Virāta and Sātyaki, the invincible,

पार्षदालश महेस्वरसो च द्रोपदेयान्त्र पच्च ये।
सौभद्रकश महाबाहुः शङ्कानन्द्द्व्यानुकृष्टो दुपध्कु पुरस्कर्। ॥ १८ ॥

18. The king of Pāñcālas the great archer, the five sons of Draupadī and the mighty-armed son of Subhadra, all together blew their respective conches.

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हुदयानि व्यदारयत।
नभवश पृथिवी चैव तुमलो व्युनादयत्। ॥ १९ ॥

19. The uproar, resounding through earth and sky, tore the hearts of the Kauravas.

अश्च व्यवस्थितापद्धार धातराष्ट्रान्कपिण्यजः।
प्रवेलं शस्त्रसमपाते धनुर्दायम् पाण्डवः। ॥ २० ॥

हर्षीकेर्ष्य तदा बाक्यपित्रमाह महीपते। ॥ २१ ॥

20. Then, seeing the army of Dhrṣṭarāṣṭra arrayed in a battle formation, Arjuna, bearing the banner of Hanumān, raised his bow, as the clash of weapons was about to begin. At that time, Oh King, Arjuna spoke these words to Hṛṣīkeśa:

अर्जुन उवाच
सेनयोहथ्योर्मध्ये रथं स्थापयं मे चच्चु। ॥ २२ ॥

Arjuna said:
21. Oh, Acyuta, place my chariot in between the two armies,

यावदेरत्रात्रीश्च योंभृकामानवस्थितान्।
कैमया सह योङ्द्रयमस्मिन्न रणसमुद्रे। ॥ २३ ॥

22. So that I may observe those standing here eager to fight, those with whom I must battle in this toil of war.

योत्त्यामानवेक्षेऽह स एते द्रव्य तांत्योऽसा
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुःख्याद्वृत्ते प्रयत्नककिर्यात्। ॥ २३ ॥

23. I can see those assembled here, eager to begin the war, wishing to fight in favor of the evil-minded son of Dhrṣṭarāṣṭra in this battle.

सहस्र उवाच
एवमुक्तो हर्षीकेर्ष्यो गुडाकेशेन भारत।
सेनयोर्थ्योर्मध्ये स्थापितम् तथोत्तमम्। ॥ २४ ॥

Saṅjaya said:
24. Requested thus by Guḍākeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa placed the great chariot in between the two armies.

भूपश्रोणपूणुक्तं समस्यं च महीश्वताम।
उवाच पार्थ पश्चयत्तस्मिनेवान्त्युत्नकुत्तिति। ॥ २५ ॥

25. In front of Bhīṣma and Droṇa and all the other rulers of the world, the Lord said: “O Partha! Behold these Kurus assembled here.”

तत्रापश्यस्तिभावायार्घः पितृवश्य पितामहान।
आचार्ययात्माद्यतुद्भावनार्थमोर्मध्येष्टम। ॥ २६ ॥

शुद्धरुसूद्ध्वक्षवपृथिख्येष्व सेनयोर्थ्योर्योर्योर्य। ॥ २७ ॥

26, 27. In the ranks of the two armies, Arjuna saw standing before him fathers and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, and many friends, as well as fathers-in-law and well-wishers.

तानसमीक्ष्य स कौन्तेय स्वानु बस्तुवस्थितान्।
कृपाय परावर्त्यो सीद्मानोजबविद्यति। ॥ २८ ॥
28. Then the son of Kunti, seeing all his kinsmen thus assembled there, filled with uttermost compassion and depressed, said the following words:

Arjuna said:

29. O Kṛṣṇa, seeing my kinsmen gathered here desiring to fight, my limbs sink down and my mouth dries up.

30. My body trembles and my hair stands on end; my bow Gāndīva falls from my hands and my skin burns all over.

31. I am unable to remain standing, my mind seems to wander and I also see inauspicious omens, O Keśava.

32. I cannot see any good coming from killing my kinsmen in battle; I do not wish for victory, O Kṛṣṇa, neither kingdom, nor pleasures.

33. How can a kingdom and the enjoyments that go along with it, or even life be of any use for us, O Govinda? Those for whose sake we desire a kingdom, enjoyments and comfort,
36, 37. O Janârdana, what satisfaction could come to us as a result of killing the sons of Dhrâtarâśtra? We could only incur sin by killing these criminals. Therefore, it is not right for us to kill our relatives, the sons of Dhrâtarâśtra.

अतः वै कुलक्षयादिधर्माणामुपक्षेपं करोति अर्जुनः स्वजनं हि कर्थं हत्वा सुखिन: स्याम माधवः।

One who kills the Kauravas, although they are equal to criminals, will also incur sin. Our opponents who are dominated by sin are already killed by that very sin. If we, however, fight and kill them in the battlefield we will also come under the power of sin. The fact that the Kauravas are not capable of perceiving fault in the destruction of their own family is because of their greed.

In the following few verses, Arjuna indicates the beginning of the destruction of the traditional norms of behaviour (dharmas), such as destruction of family, etc.

38, 39, 40. How could we be happy after killing our own relatives, O Mâdava? Even if our relatives, with their minds clouded by greed, do not see anything wrong in the destruction of family and sin in the treachery of friends. How is it possible, O Janârdana, that we do not know how to avoid this evil, although we can clearly understand the wrong in bringing destruction upon the family?

40, 41. When the family is destroyed the eternal family dharma disappears, and when the family dharma disappears adharma takes control over the entire family. And because of adharma dominating the family, O Kṛṣṇa, the women of the family become corrupted.

42, 43, 44. When corruption of women takes place, O Vārṣneya, intermixture of castes takes place. This intermixture leads to hell, for the family destroyers and the family itself. Their ancestors fall as well, deprived of offerings of pindodaka due to them. Through the wrongdoings done by the destroyers of the family that causes the intermixture of the castes, the eternal dharmas of caste and family become extinct.

44, 45. We have heard, O Janârdana, that people whose family dharmas have been destroyed unavoidably need to live in hell.
Indiscriminate killing with the view to attain a given result (viṣeṣa phala buddhi) such as enjoyments, pleasures, power, etc., and killing with the notion that a particular person must be killed, are both great sins.

Thus, to summarize what he has stated thus far and to indicate his great distress, Arjuna falls silent and says to himself:

अहो वत महत्वार्यं कतु म्य्रर्विसता वयः।
यद्र्म्यपुरुखलोभे हन्तु स्वजन्मुदयतः: || ४५ ॥

45. Ah, we are determined to commit a great sin as we are on the path to kill our kinsmen, because of the greed for the pleasures that come as a result of ruling a kingdom.

वयमिंति — कौशल्याण्डवभेदभिषा: सर्व एवेत्यथः: || ४५ ॥
एवं सर्वार्याविवेकिनः मम विवेकिनः किमुचिता, उचि क्कतव्युद्धलितनम्;
एतत्तुचिततरस्मित्यः

The word vayam in the verse refers to both Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas.

Arjuna (who unlike the rest of the gathered ksatriyas still possessed the power of discrimination) wants to know what he should do in that situation. It seemed to him, that the best way to deal with that situation was to simply withdraw from the battlefield.

यदिमामप्रतीकारमश्च शास्त्रपाणयः।
धार्तराष्ट्र रणे हन्युस्तमेक्ष्मतरं भवेत्॥ ४६ ॥

46. If the sons of Dhrṣṭarāṣṭra, bearing weapons, should kill me unresisting and unarmed in the battle, that would be better for me.

Arjuna said:

47. Having spoken thus at the time of battle, throwing away arrow and bow, Arjuna sat down on the seat of the chariot, his mind and heart overwhelmed with grief.

अद्र संग्रहःलोकः:

विद्याविद्योभयाघातसंघट विवशीक्रः तः:
यथृपति हयमपि त्वक्त्वच निविवेकोभवेनमुनि: || १ ॥

SUMMARY VERSE:

A wise person, who was compelled into the troubling union between knowledge and ignorance, should, having analysed and rejected both, enter the state free from thought.

इति श्रीमहामहेश्वराचार्यवर्षराजानानाभिनवाङ्गुपादविकार्ते
श्रीमद्व्रीतार्थसंग्रहेऽप्रथमोऽध्यायः: १ ॥ इति शिवम्
अष्ट द्वितीयोषध्यायः

CHAPTER 2

साध्य उदचः
तत्थ तथा कुप्याविष्ठमश्रुपूर्णकुलेशकणम्।
सौदर्मनमिदं वायुभवच मधुसूदनः। २।

Sañjaya said:
1. To him thus overcome by compassion, full of sorrow, his eyes downcast and filled with tears, Madhusūdana spoke these words:

श्रीभर्गवावनुषाठ
कुस्तस्व कमलमिदं वियम समुपस्थितम्।
अनायजुयमस्वर्यमकर्तिकरमजुन्। २।

The Lord said:
2. From where has this blemish, alien to noble men, causing disgrace and opposed to heaven, come upon you, O Arjuna, at this time of danger?

आदाकाळावहाराण्येश्वर श्रीभगवानदुन्त विप्रेभवति, कथापु मानं करिष्यति, अतः ‘अनायजुयम्’ इत्यह। २।

वषेयादिभिस्तंभसंभविदधयं तत्वधर्मभिमानोस्यमित्यादि दर्शयति

In the beginning, the Lord enlightens Arjuna only by resorting to examples from ordinary human experience. Therefore, he, the Lord, said: “Alien to noble men”. Then gradually, he will begin to instruct Arjuna on the path of knowledge.

By words such as klaibya, etc., (in the following verse) the Lord is scolding Arjuna. He is showing that, what Arjuna is considering to be dharma is actually adharma.

पा क्लेयं गच्छ कौन्येय नैतत्त्वघुषा पदते।
कुजेण हदयोद्भित्वं त्यक्त्योत्तित्वं परतप॥ ३॥

3. Do not yield to weakness, O Son of Kuntī. It is unworthy of you. Shake off this unacceptable faint-heartedness. Stand up, O Scorcher of Enemies!

अर्जुन उदचः
कथं भीष्मभं संबुन्धे औष्णं च मधुसूदनं
इषुभि; प्रतियोश्यामि पूजार्वस्विस्तुदल॥ ४॥

Arjuna said:
4. How will I confront Bhīṣma and Droṇa with arrows on the battlefield, O Madhusūdana? They are worthy of reverence, O Slayer of Enemies!

गुरुंनन्द्या हि महानभावाः
वेष्यक्ष्वर्तः भेष्मप्रयोह लोके।
न तयज्ज्ञातास्तु गुरुभिज्ञाते
भुजीय भोगानु भिच्छिदृश्यन्॥ ५॥

5. It is better to beg for food in this world than to kill these noble-minded teachers; having killed them with a desire for worldly gain, I will enjoy only blood-stained pleasures in this world.

‘गृहृद्योष्णं’ इत्यदिना, ‘भुजीय भोगानु’ इत्यन्ते च कर्मचिवोपातु-सन्थानां
फलविशेषानुसरणां च हैत्यया पुव्रंपेश्व सुचित्वत॥ ५॥

By the sentence, “How will I confront Bhīṣma and Droṇa” and by the sentence, “I will enjoy only blood-stained pleasures”, Arjuna indicates that he would like to avoid battle, both by the consideration of action (karma viśeṣa), because he wants to avoid killing his relatives, and by consideration of the results (phala viśeṣa), i.e. killing for the sake of enjoyment or pleasure.
6. I do not know which is preferable for us, that we should defeat them or they should defeat us. If we kill the sons of Dhrtarāṣṭra standing before us we should lose all desire to live.

"I do not know" (naitadvidmah), by these words Arjuna indicates that he intends to contemplate the consequences of killing his teachers and relatives, etc. Normally, it is not possible to act without contemplating the possible results of a particular act. Nobody goes into battle without first considering the possibility of defeat. However, in Arjuna’s situation, victory is also not a desired outcome. This is the reason why Arjuna said, “It is better to beg for food in this world than to kill these noble-minded teachers”. At this point, Arjuna is completely incapable of deciding which outcome would be preferable for him, i.e., victory or defeat. This is because even his victory would bring destruction of his relatives.

7. My own being is overwhelmed by the taint of weakness, confused in mind about the nature of my dharma. I pray to you, tell me decisively what is good for me. I am your disciple; teach me, for I have taken refuge in you.
Therefore, there is no reason whatsoever to grieve either for those who are ‘alive’ (agatásu) or ‘dead’ (gatásu).

If one grieves for the ātman, which moves from body to body, then one should also grieve when that same ātman goes from youth to middle age and from middle age to old age.

Having explained these two points the Lord continues:

13. There was never a time when I was not, neither you nor these lords of men. Nor will there ever be a time when all of us shall cease to be.

14. As the dweller in this body passes into childhood, youth and old age, so also does he pass into another body. This does not bewilder the wise.

12. You grieve for those whom there should be no grief, and you speak words that don’t behoove the wise. Wise men grieve neither for the dead nor for the living.

One should never grieve for either the body or the ātman. The body because it is perishable, and the ātman because it is eternal.
Those who are not wise grieve even under ever-changing conditions such as hot and cold, happiness and suffering, which are created through contact with the outside objects (which in the next verse are expressed by the word *mātra*) with *ātman* through the medium of the sense organs.

मात्रास्पर्शात्तु कौन्तेय शीतलोकमुखदः:खिड़कः।
आगमापापिनःनित्यासांस्तितिकश्च्यः भारत!॥ १५ ॥

15. Contacts (of the senses) with their objects, O Son of Kunti, give rise to (the experience of) cold and heat, pleasure and pain. They come and go and are impermanent. Bear them patiently, O Bharata!

अथवा—मात्रापि:—हिन्दौर्येषां स्पर्शः न तु साक्षात्परमात्मनः। आगमः—
उप्तिः।। अपायो—विनाशः।। एतदुक्षितस्तिक्ष्यश्र सहस्रः॥ १५ ॥

This point can be explained in yet another way by saying that various conditions such as cold and hot, etc., are only connected with sense organs and do not have direct contact with the *ātman*. The word ‘coming’ (*āgama*) here means a generation of a particular product or condition and the word ‘going’ (*apāya*) means destruction of that particular product or condition. (Having in mind the transient nature of these two), tolerate their ever-changing nature.

यं हि न व्यक्तयन्ते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभं।
समुदः:खसुखः धीरं सोऽस्मृतव्यय कल्यते॥ १६ ॥

16. That man indeed whom these (contacts) do not disturb, who is even-minded in pleasure and pain, steadfast, he is fit for immortality, O Best of Men!

नन्तु यत्र एवागमपापिन एते सवधिविशीलतात्व एवोऽशयनते? मैयुः।
तथाहि, कोऽयमागमो नाम? उपत्तिः पुरुषाः। सापिका? असतत्वालाभः सा,
इति त्वस्तिः। असतत्वाभवत निःस्वभावत निरागतः। निरामाय च निःस्वभावः।
कथं स स्वभावीकर्तु शक्यः; अनीलं हि न नीलीकर्तु शक्यम्-स्वभावात्तरापते—

हृदयान। तथा च शाल्मः
‘नाहिव स्वभावः भावान्म् व्याप्तीतीतीयः:।।’

इति। अथ सत्र एवागमालाभ उप्तिः। तद्व लक्षणमोऽष्य जाल्पि अनन्तवाभू
नित्याएववागमे कोऽशयनता। एवमपापिनः सतोऽशय। असतत्वावदः।
सत्त्वाभवस्यापि कथमसत्त्वाभवः। इति चेतु, आदेशः। तथा या न काल:ः स्तातः। स्वाभावस्यात्मकः। अथ
पुरुषादिनयः नाश: क्रियाते। स यदी व्याप्तिः। भावस्य न वृत्तः। न तु यस्य—इति
चेतु, मा नाम दर्शः भावः। न तत्त्वाभवः: परानुसं: इति। अव्याप्तिकर्त्सु
नासाशिवलुकम्। तत्तदत्तेनस्त्रिपियः।।

The question could be raised here: Does one grieve because of the fact that these conditions are impermanent and are continuously produced and destroyed?

In order to answer this question we first need to understand what is meant by the word ‘coming’ (*āgama*). If we take the word *āgama* to mean a generation of a particular product, then the question about the nature of that product could be raised. If we accept that this product comes into existence from non-existence, then it simply would not exist 3. Therefore, this opinion is not acceptable. This is because non-existence doesn’t have an existence of its own. How can that which doesn’t have a self-existing nature be made to possess any

3 The commentary on this verse, written in part as a dialogue between Naiyāyikas and Sāṅkhyaśas, presents the view of these two schools regarding the theory of causation (*kāryakārayanabhāva*). The core of the argument between the two schools is, whether the effect before its creation is of the nature of existence or non-existence. In other words, whether the effect inherently exists in its cause (*sādākryavāda*) or whether it comes into being from non-existence (*asādākryavāda*). The first view (*sādākryavāda*) is advocated by the followers of Sāṅkhya while the second view (*asādākryavāda*) is advocated by the followers of Nyāya. In Sāṅkhya Kārikās 9, which actually proves the existence of Prakṛti, we find Sāṅkhya’s arguments in favor of *sādākryavāda*. The Kārikā reads as follows: “The effect is existent, (1) because what is ‘non-existent’ cannot be produced; (2) because there is a definite relation of the cause (with the effect); (3) because all is not possible; (4) because the efficient can do only that for which it is efficient; (5) (lastly), because the effect is of the same essence as the cause.” As it can be seen from his commentary, Abhinavagupta takes a stand in favor of *sādākryavāda* of the Sāṅkhyaśas. Although he does not present Kashmir
nature? How can that which is not blue by nature be made blue? This view is logically unjustified, because an object that was painted blue has not changed its original nature (svabhāva). It is stated in the śāstras:

As the heat belongs to the sun and cannot be separated from it, in the same way, the very nature (svabhāva) of various creatures is not different from these creatures.

If, however, a product comes into existence from what was already existent, then its non-existence was never present. This proves its permanency. If the nature of reality is permanency then what could be accomplished by grief?

The same question could be raised about the meaning of the word ‘going’ (apāya), which here means destruction. In other words: What is the nature of an object that is destroyed? Is it of the nature of existence (sat) or non-existence (asat)? That which is non-existence doesn’t exist. The nature of existence can never be non-existent. How can something be of the nature of non-existence at one moment and then of the nature of existence in the next moment? If an object is of the nature of non-existence at one particular moment then it should be (of the nature of non-existence) at the preceding moment. One’s own nature cannot be abandoned.

But what would happen if the nature (svabhāva) of an object is changed by force, as for example when we destroy an object by using a big hammer? The answer to this question is that the destruction is different from what is destroyed, i.e., destruction is not the same as the object destroyed. How could you say that nothing has happened to the object, it is not visible, it is destroyed. Yes, but even if the nature (svabhāva) of that particular object is not visible it does not mean that it is destroyed. As for example, an object is not destroyed if we cover it with a piece of cloth.

The argument that destruction is not different from the object destroyed is entirely unjustifiable.

In the next verse, the Lord summarizes this idea.

\\**Nāsato vīdantate bhāvyo nābhāvyo vīdantate sat:**

\\**Udbhāraya dūṣṭaṁkṣaraṁstvamōtacamādaṁ:** || 17 ||

17. The unreal has no existence; the real has no non-existence (never ceases to be). The seers of ultimate reality have thus perceived the final truth about them both.

Shaivism’s view on this particular topic, it seems appropriate to briefly outline their stand on the topic of the causal relation. According to Kashmir Shaivism’s theory, effects, i.e., the entire universe, even before creation already exists in its unmanifested form in the consciousness of the creator. Therefore, the Kashmir Shaivism’s theory of causation is also in essence sadkāryavāda. However, there are major differences between the two schools. Śāiva thinkers find two major faults in Śaṃkhya’s theory. The first is that cause and effect, which according to Śaṃkhya exist in the relationship of identity-cum-difference (sadātmaya), cannot be logically justified. This is because the cause and the effect, i.e., the seed and the tree cannot exist at the same time. The second fault is that Śaṃkhya cannot explain how effects come into existence from Prakṛti, which according to them is insentient (jāda). Therefore, Śāiva thinkers put forward their own theory. They argue that the entire creation is the manifestation of the absolute consciousness stirred into motion by icchāsakti, i.e., the divine will of the creator. Thus, when a potter creates a pot, it is that same icchāsakti, which is identical with consciousness, that operates through a potter, who is also part of the same consciousness. Furthermore, it is that same consciousness that is found to be the ultimate source of both instruments used in the production of a pot as well as the material used in its creation. Therefore, according to this system, both cause and effect are ultimately the effects of the highest consciousness, who is the ultimate cause.

In this verse, the Lord explained the same point to Arjuna according to the ordinary human experience. The body, which continually undergoes change, does not have real existence, precisely because of being inherently liable to change. Paramātman, on the other hand, possesses eternal existence and is indestructible, because of not being liable to change. In the Vedas we read:
Indeed, this ātman is indestructible and is complete in itself (Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, IV. 5. 14).

The highest abode of both existence and non-existence is the Paramātman from which both emerge and into which both dissolve.

In the following verse, the Lord will answer the question regarding the nature of that highest reality that was seen by the seers. He will make clear whether the highest reality is permanent or impermanent.

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्ध येन सर्वित्तं तत्तमोऽविनाशि।
विनाशक्वच्छवस्त्याय न कश्चन्त्त्वुल्लभित्॥ १८ ॥

18. Know that to be indestructible by which all this universe is pervaded. No one is capable of destroying this imperishable.

तुश्चाः आत्मा च अविनाशिः॥ १८।तुश्चाः आत्मा च अविनाशिः॥ १८॥

The particle tu in this verse stands for the conjunction ‘and’. The physical body is inherently liable to destruction and (tu) ātman is indestructible.

अन्तवतं इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्तः: श्रीरीणः।
विनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तत्पाल्युद्द्वस्ब भारतः॥ १९ ॥

19. These bodies are known to have an end; the dweller in the body is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable. Therefore, fight, O Bhārata.

निरुपावत्साताङ्गे स्थूलविनाशायनः: तदन्यथानुपपत्तेऽर्च विनाशिनः।
प्रतिक्षांमवस्त्यात्रवभानः।। ॥ यदृच्छ।
अन्ते पुवण्यं द्वैत प्रतिक्ष्यं नतत्वहानिन्सुमृतोऽर्थ।
इति। मूनिनापि
कलानां पुण्यगढानां प्रतिभेदः: क्षणे क्षणे।
वर्तिते सर्वभावेषु सौक्षम्यासु न विभाज्यते॥

In the verse it suggests that pure consciousness (prakāśa), which includes within itself the thought construct (vikalpa) as well as the means of gaining knowledge. In Tantrasāra, Abhinavagupta, while describing the nature of pure vikalpa (śuddha vikalpa) and its ability to grant the experience of the highest reality, makes it clear that the highest reality is not the object of knowledge of that pure vikalpa. He explains, “Therefore, those who have gradually purified their vikalpas as a result of a powerful falling of grace (saktipāta) of Śiva as well as of the study of the right śāstras, etc., enter their own innermost nature. If this view is accepted, then the question could be posed as to whether the highest reality is merely the object of a vikalpa. The answer to this question is that it is not, because the pure vikalpa was only instrumental in removing the impressions of duality. The highest reality is self-illuminating because of its property of being present in every form and everywhere. In respect to the Highest Reality vikalpa is neither of any assistance nor hindrance.” (Tantrasāra, chapter 4, p. 22.)
and therefore, it is not an object of knowledge. Continuous change is the nature of the objects of knowledge, which are insentient matter. However, this is not the case with the sentient ātman, who has consciousness as its nature and whose nature (svabhāva) doesn’t change. Therefore, bodies that undergo continuous change and ātman, which is ever unchangeable, are not to be grieved for. This is the reason why sage Vyāsa has used the primary suffix nyat in the expression ‘not to be grieved for’ (asocyaṇ). Although used only once, the word asocyaṇ (in verse 12) should be understood to have two objects, i.e., the ātman and the body.

20. He who understands the ātman to be the killer, and he who takes the ātman to be killed, both equally do not know the truth. The ātman neither kills nor is he killed.

One who believes that the ātman or the body is either killer or that what is killed is an ignorant person. This belief is the reason for bondage.

21. The ātman is never born, nor does he ever die; nor once having been, does the ātman cease to be. Unborn, eternal, everlasting, primeval, he is not killed when the body is killed.

Furthermore, the Lord makes clear that it is not that after existing once the ātman doesn’t come into existence once again. On the contrary, he will exist again after having existed before. Therefore, it is said that he is not born. It is said that the ātman doesn’t die because, having existed once, he will again come into existence.

22. One who knows him to be indestructible, eternal, unborn, everlasting, how can that man, O Pārtha, be killed or a killer?

One who has realized his own self (ātman) knows that ātman cannot be either killed or killer, because knowledge is awakened in him. Therefore, he cannot be bound.

23. As a man casting away worn-out garments takes on other new ones, so the dweller in the body, casting away worn-out bodies, takes on others that are new.
As a person whose clothes have been worn out takes another piece of clothing but himself doesn’t get destroyed, so the ātman takes on various bodies.

24. Weapons cannot cut him, nor can fire burn him, water cannot make him wet, nor can wind dry him.

25. The ātman cannot be cut; he cannot be burned; he cannot be wetted, nor yet can he be dried. He is eternal, all pervading, stable, immovable and primeval.

26. The ātman is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable, and unchangeable; therefore, knowing him in this way, you should not grieve.

A weapon cannot harm the ātman. The ātman, which is consciousness alone, non-dependent, non-relational, complete in himself and absolute freedom (svatantra), cannot be destroyed by any transformation that a particular object (in which ātman inheres) is subjected to. As for example when an object takes on a different form, or when its support is destroyed, or when it is separated into parts, or when it is confronted by stronger contradictory forces.

The ātman, which is permanent, is constantly associated with new bodies. When the ātman gets associated with a given body, it continuously experiences different conditions. These conditions are those which that particular body is experiencing during its lifetime. This is because the body is not the same even for one moment. Having this in mind, one should not grieve for the ātman.

27. Even if you think of him as continually being born and continually dying, even then, O Mighty-armed, you should not grieve for this ātman.

If (for the sake of argument) we accept the concept that a body is continuously (eternally, ever) reborn because of the beginningless stream of destruction (and creation of that body), even then there is no reason for grief. If on the other hand, we consider it to be continuously (ever) perishable, because it changes every moment, even then there is no reason for grief. Either we accept ātman to be constantly born because of being associated with bodies, or we accept ātman to be continuously dying because of being dissociated with bodies. In either case it is not reasonable to grieve.

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7 The ātman, being of the nature of consciousness, does not inherently possess any cause responsible for his creation. Therefore, he cannot be destroyed or influenced in any way either by adding or removing any possible cause.

8 As for example when milk turns into curd.

9 That is to say when its material cause is destroyed.

10 Like a pot when its constituent parts are separated from each other.

11 As for example, when as deer is killed by a lion.
Otherwise, the eternal nature of the ātman and the non-eternal nature of the body couldn’t be justified. Because:

जातस्य हि धृतो मृत्युधुःक्तं जन्म युगस्य च।
तत्साधपरिहार्यवं न तव शोचितमहसि। ॥ २८ ॥

अपिच

Death is indeed certain for the born, and birth is certain for the dead; therefore, you should not grieve over the inevitable.

जन्मन एकान्तार नाशो नाशादन्तार जन्म इति चक्रवद्यं जन्ममरणसंस्तान इति
किंचिपैरिमाणेश्चत्तात्मिति। ॥ २८ ॥

30. One perceives the ātman as a wonder, another speaks of the ātman as a wonder, yet another hears of the ātman as a wonder. But even on hearing of him no one understands his nature.

आश्रयवत् पश्चाति किशिदेन--
पाश्रयवहुदति तथैवविधम्।
आश्रयववेचैनां: श्रीणौति
शुचायेन वेद न चैव किशित। ॥ ३० ॥

29. Creatures are unmanifested in the beginning, manifested in the middle state, and unmanifested again at the end, O Bhārata. In regard to this, what could be accomplished by anguish?

अव्यक्तदीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भवतात।
अव्यक्तनिधनायेव तत्र का परिदेवता। ॥ २९ ॥

नित्तिः: सतु अनिता वा, यस्तावदर्श्यो शोभकाल्य प्रायेऽक्ष्यति: अन्तो
चाच्यति:; मध्यत्यस्य व्यक्तम विकार इति प्रत्युत विकारे शोभनीय न स्वभावे। किंव
यंतरमुखायां किंचिप्रभवमां तदेव यथात्रम विचित्रविभावतत्या स्वाभावे
दर्शितात्वं तत्सत्तात् सहींसितिसहींवैचैन्यं नित्ये।
तथात्म्याविभाद्यि काश्य
शोचाया। ॥ २९ ॥

एवंविचं च
Even other kṣatriyas who are full of desire will not give up such a battle, which is an open door to heaven. What about you who has received instruction from Kṛṣṇa himself? This verse, however, shouldn’t be taken to advocate reaching heaven as the ultimate goal.¹³

The Lord points out to Arjuna that, that very fear which he is unwilling to confront here on the battlefield, whose roots are deep and possesses many branches, will always follow him wherever he goes.

34. Now, if you do not fight in this battle, which is in accord with your duty (dharma), then casting away your own dharma and fame, you will incur sin.

35. And also people will ever tell of your disgrace, and to a man of honor, disgrace is worse than dying.

36. The great warriors will think that you withdraw from battle out of fear, and those who held you in high esteem will belittle you.

37. Your enemies will speak many improper words of you and will deride your skills. What could be worse than this?

¹³ The highest goal in Kashmir Shaivism is unification with Śiva, who is the highest reality. Heaven is the limited goal that comes as a result of attachment for the limited fruits of action.
हतो वा प्राप्यसि स्वर्ग जित्या वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम्।
तस्मादुत्तिन्द्र कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृत्विष्णु॥ ३८॥

38. If killed, you will attain heaven, if victorious, you will enjoy the earth; therefore, stand up, O Son of Kunti, determined to fight!

श्लोकपरस्कमि मदभुधाय वादरूपप्रस्ते यदि लीक्षिकेन व्यवहारणासे
भवांस्यात्यवरायद्रुहुमेषति॥ ३८॥

These five verses express teachings in accordance with the ordinary, everyday human experience. Therefore, even if Arjuna lives his life following the worldly norms, he would still need to fight this battle.

सुखदुःखे समेत कृत्या लाभाताभी जयाजयोऽ
ततो युद्धाय वृत्तस्व नैव पापवाप्पवसि॥ ३९॥

39. Having gained equanimity in pleasure and pain, in gain and loss, victory and defeat, then engage in battle. By following this path, you will not incur sin.

तव तु स्वधर्मत्वेव कर्माणि कुर्वतो न कदाचित्यापपस्मान्यः॥ ३९॥

If you perform action in accordance with your duty (dharma) you will never incur sin.

एषा तेजस्विभिषिता सांख्ये बुद्धिव च त्वमा श्रुणु।
बुद्धशा युक्तो यत्या यथार्थ कर्मवंच प्राह्यापसि॥ ४०॥

40. This which has been explained to you, is knowledge in terms of Sāṁkhya; hear it now in terms of Yoga. By establishing yourself in this knowledge, O Pārtha, you will rid yourself of the binding influence of action.

एषा च तव सांख्ये—सम्यगाने बुद्धि—निश्चयात्मिकाउऽका। एष्वच च यथा
योगेः—कर्मकौसले योक्तेते तत्वत्व श्रुणु। यया बुद्धशा कर्मणाम् बन्ध्यकल्य स्वक्षयसि।

नह कर्मणि स्वयं बध्यति—जडत्वाद; अत: स्वयमात्मा कर्मचिर्वासनात्म—
कृत्यात्मान्य बध्यति॥ ४०॥

This knowledge has been explained to you according to the Sāṁkhya system, which is correct and decisive knowledge. Now, listen to this same knowledge according to the Yoga system, which is skill in action. This knowledge will make you free from the bondage of action. Action by itself cannot bind anyone because it is insentient. The atman binds himself by the acts existing in a subtle form, i.e., impressions of the past deeds (vāsanās).  

नेहातिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रायवयों न विवते।
स्वत्त्वप्रस्तत्य धर्मस्य प्रायते महतो भयात।॥ ४१॥

41. Here in this practice of yoga no effort is lost, and there is no loss of what is gained. Even a little of this experience protects from great fear.

अर्यं बुद्धि अतिक्रमणे—अपराधेन प्रमादेन नाशो न भवति—
प्रमादयाः सामात्ति। यथा च परिमितेन स्रीख्रुधक्रणेन ज्ञात्यामानोऽपि पैलकता:।
सदेः शीतैवभवति; एवमन्या स्वत्त्वप्रस्तत्य योगवृष्ट्रा महारथं संसाररूपं
विनयति॥ ४१॥

न चैषा बुद्धिरस्वयंसति, किंतुहि

One established in this knowledge of yoga cannot be destroyed, either as a result of mistake or carelessness. This is because in this knowledge there is no place for error and therefore, no possibility of committing mistakes. As even a small amount of sandal paste extinguishes the flame burning in a pot full of oil, similarly, the experience of the atman by means of the yoga of knowledge (jñāna yoga) destroys fear in the form of continuous birth and death (samsāra).

14 Vāsanās are impressions left in the mind, created as a result of past actions. These actions could be performed either on the level of mind, speech or body. Their performance leaves impressions in the mind, which become seeds for the future desires, thoughts and actions. Vāsanās create continuous and uninterrupted series of thoughts and desires that cover one’s inermost nature, atman.
This knowledge is not a new doctrine because it was known by many in ancient times. If it is so, then what is the nature of that decisive knowledge?

42. In this yoga, O Joy of the Kurus, the intellect is decisive and one-pointed, but many-branched and endlessly diverse are the intellects of the indecisive.

43. The undiscerning, delighting in the study of the Veda, O Pārtha, speak flowery words declaring that there is nothing else.

44. They are filled with desires and have heaven as their highest goal; during their lifetime they strive to attain the fruit of actions and prescribe many special rites for the attainment of enjoyment and power.

45. A discerning state of intellect does not arise in the meditation of those who are attached to enjoyment and power, and whose minds are carried away by those flowery words.

Those who are overwhelmed by desire for the fruits of action perceive Vedic texts as "flowery words" (puspitām vācam). In other words, they perceive the Vedas as being permeated by the fruits of sacrifice, such as the heaven that might be attained in the future. These people accept action as the only purpose in life. This way of thinking shows that they were not properly educated. They have been misled by their wrong interpretation of the Vedas, which is the result of their own imagination. Therefore, even if they possess a decisive intellect they are not entitled to samādhi. This is because they practice samādhi in order to attain some limited result. This is in brief the purport of these three verses.

Therefore, the Lord said:

46. The Vedas possess three qualities (gunas), which are instrumental in binding. Free yourself from these three gunas, O Arjuna; be beyond duality, ever established in the highest reality, free from thoughts of possessions and comfort, possessed of the Self.
A brāhmaṇa, who is primarily concerned with knowledge and carrying out his duty (dharma), can make use of only a limited amount of Vedic speech.

रोगस्थ: कृष ब्रमणिष्ण सेढो त्वक्त्वा धनान्य।
सिद्धहस्तिष्णो: समो भूलो समातं योग उच्चते॥ ४९॥

49. Established in yoga, O Winner of Wealth, perform actions, having abandoned attachment and having become balanced in success and failure, for balance of mind is called yoga.
52. He whose intellect is established in this yoga of knowledge casts off both good and evil even while living in this world. Therefore, establish yourself in this yoga. Yoga is skill in action.

53. The wise, who are fully established in the yoga of knowledge, having renounced the fruits born of actions and being liberated from the bondage of rebirth, arrive at a state devoid of suffering.

54. When your intellect crosses beyond the mire of delusion, then you will become detached from what has been heard and what is yet to be heard.
Verse 55 describes the yogin whose intellect has become firm and unshakable because of the experience of samādhi. This kind of yogin is technically called sthita-prajñā. By the question (tasya kā bhāṣa?), the desire to know the basis for the use of the word sthita-prajñā to denote a yogin in samādhi is indicated. In other words, the question is whether the word sthita-prajñā is used in its conventional or derivative sense? This is the first question. Although there is no doubt that the word is used in its conventional sense, the question regarding its derivative sense is justified. This is because when the derivative sense of the word sthita-prajñā is obtained, it might help to clarify the nature of the yogin in samādhi.

In regard to the word sthirādhi the question is whether this word stands for itself or does it stand for something outside of itself? In other words, the question is whether the word is used in its derivative sense or does it also stand for a yogin still on the path of reaching samādhi (tapasvin)? This is the second question.

The third question is where should he (mentally) sit, i.e., how should he practice? Or better, where does his mind need to be established so that he can experience samādhi? The fourth question is: What does he attain through his practice?

17 In order to understand the difference between the derivative and conventional usage of the word we can take an example of the word pankaja, which means born in or from the mud. Now, if the word pankaja is taken in its derivative sense then it refers to everything that is born in the mud. However, conventionally the word pankaja is used to denote the lotus flower. Conventional usage is usually more restricted than the derivative one.
Only that kind of sage (muni) is called sthitaprajña who doesn't have any attachment to pleasure or aversion to suffering.

This is correct because:

\[ \text{Only that kind of sage (muni) is called sthitaprajña who doesn't have any attachment to pleasure or aversion to suffering.} \]

57. When a man leaves behind all the desires that are deeply rooted in his mind, O Partha, when he is contented in the self through the self alone, then he is said to be one in whom knowledge has become steady.

The Lord said:

59. He who is without affection towards anything, who neither welcomes nor rejects when gaining good or bad, his knowledge is well-established.

This kind of yogin doesn't experience pleasure or pain when he is having pleasant or unpleasant experiences.

58. He whose mind is not agitated in the midst of sorrows, who although surrounded by pleasures is free from longing, from whom passion, fear and anger have disappeared, he is said to be a sage of steady intellect.

As a cook, (although bearing that name) is not always engaged in the act of cooking, in the same way a yogin is not always established in yoga. Whenever a yogin withdraws his sense organs into the ātman, he (like a turtle who contracts its limbs) leaves behind worldly objects. Only in such a situation, can a yogin be called sthitaprajña. Or we can say that he withdraws his sense organs from the objects of senses and places both of them under the control of the ātman.
The next question to be answered is: why the term sthitaprajña is not used for a yogin who is still not fully realized, i.e., tapasvin? It is said:

विषया विनिवर्तते निराहारस्य देहिनः।
सर्ववर्जा सीतारामस्य परं दुःखा निवर्तते॥ ६९॥

61. The sense objects depart from him who abstains from them, but the taste for them persists; but even the taste departs from a yogin who has experienced the highest reality.

यदापि आहारं:—रूपादिभिर्विभूषणः: संबंधोपस्य नासित, तथापि तस्य विषया
अन्तःकरणात्मूलांगत्वः रसं वर्जितः। अतो नासी विषयप्राप्तः।
योगिनस्तु परमेश्वरदेशनालपराणो न भवति, अन्यस्ते तु तपस्विनो नासी
निवर्तते॥ ६९॥

Although the tapasvin is free from attachment to the external objects such as form, etc., his attachment is still for the ‘taste’, i.e., mental attachment inherent in the internal sense organs. Therefore, the tapasvin cannot be called sthitaprajña. A fully realized yogin is free from this kind of attachment because of the experience of the highest reality. This however, is not the case with the tapasvin.

यतस्यापि हि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः।
इन्द्रियाः प्रमाणां हरति प्रसंभं मनः॥ ६२॥

62. The turbulent senses, O Son of Kunti, forcibly carry away the mind even of a wise man striving to control them.

यत्—यस्मात् तस्यापि—तपस्विनो मन इन्द्रियेहितये; अथवा यतस्य—
सयतस्यापि। योगिना च मन एवं जेतवयम्, इति द्वितीयो निर्णयः॥ ६२॥

Therefore, the mind of a tapasvin also (tasyāpi) is forcefully taken by his sense organs. Or the word yattasyal could be taken to refer to a yogin who still needs to conquer his mind. This is the answer to the second question.

Chapter 2

63. Having brought his senses under control by his mind, let him sit established in yoga, intent on Me, for only he whose senses are controlled possesses well-established knowledge.

य एवं मनसा इन्द्रियाणि नियमयति, नतु अप्रज्ञा, स एव ध्येयप्रज्ञ:।
स च मनस्य एवासीते—मायेव चिदात्मानं परमेश्वरं अभयस्ये॥ ६३॥

Only a yogin who controls his sense organs with his mind can be referred to as one whose knowledge is firmly established (sthitaprajña). The same does not apply to a yogin who purposely makes his sense organs weaker. A yogin should always be in search of the highest reality, i.e., should always meditate on Paramesvara, who is the highest reality.

ध्यायतो विषयायं: सज्जस्तेषूपजातेऽ
सज्जस्तः सज्जायते कामः कामाक्रोधऽपिभिजातेऽ॥ ६४॥

64. Dwelling on the objects of the senses a man develops attachment for them, from attachment desire is born, desire gives rise to anger.

क्रोधद्वितियं सम्प्रेषः: समर्पहात्मत्तमत्विविधेनः।
स्मृतिभ्रस्ताः बुधिनाशात् प्रणाशयिते॥ ६५॥

65. From anger arises delusion; from delusion failure of memory; from failure of memory destruction of intellect; through the destruction of the intellect total destruction ensues.

तपस्विनो विषयल्यमेव विषयायणं पर्वतस्य। ध्यायतो हि ते विषयेऽ
ध्यानकाल एवं च सज्जायते। उपजजस्ते,—इत्युप्पायो विषयायण:।

ध्येयप्रज्ञस्य॥ ६५॥
(In the process of doing his austerities) a tapasvin having abandoned one object gets attached to another one. Then again through meditation he abandons attachment to that particular object. However, during the time of meditation (although he abandons the objects externally) he develops attachment to these objects internally. On the other hand, one whose knowledge is firmly established (stithaprajña) is free from attachment to the objects without using any means, i.e., meditation etc.

66. But he who is established in his own self, who is free from attachment and aversion, who controls his own mind; he, even while experiencing the objects of the senses, attains tranquillity.

67. In tranquillity is born the cessation of all his sorrows. Indeed the knowledge of the man of tranquil mind soon becomes firmly established.

68. He whose mind is not controlled is devoid of knowledge and the possibility of meditation. Without meditation there can be no peace, and without peace how can there be happiness?

69. When the mind is governed by the wandering senses, his intellect is carried away by it as the wind carries away a ship on the water.

70. Therefore, O Mighty-armed, his knowledge stands established whose senses are completely withdrawn from their objects.

However, a fully realized yogin, one who has his sense organs under control, in spite of being engaged in worldly activities is not overwhelmed by the waves of anger, etc.

A yogin, although completely engaged in all worldly activities, remains above them. In the following verse the Lord briefly describes a fully realized yogin.

71. That which is night for all beings, in that the self-controlled is awake. That in which all beings are awake is night for the sage who sees.
The word night (niṣāḍ) means māyā, which is the cause of the delusion of ordinary people. In contrast to ordinary people a yogin is awake in that māyā. The question here is: How is it possible for a yogin to remove the influence of māyā?

The conditions (of life) in which ordinary people are awake, i.e., engaged in performing activities, (these conditions) are night for the yogin. This is because a yogin is not awake for worldly activities.

We can say that māyā imposes its influence (on ordinary people) by applying two different means. First, it gives names and forms to various objects. Second, it gives a false experience of pleasure that is derived from the experience of various objects. It is because ordinary people fail to recognize the real nature of the objects, which possess various names and forms, that they continue to live under the spell of experience based on pleasure and pain.

A yogin, on the other hand, looks for a means to uproot the very essence of this deluding nature of māyā. His tool in overcoming māyā is disregard for the second function of māyā, which is instrumental in giving pleasure. The yogin is capable of doing this because he has destroyed all ignorance through right knowledge.

These two statements by the Lord, that a yogin sees day in night and night in day through right knowledge, is an extraordinary statement. This is to say, that a yogin stays awake in knowledge where all people are deluded and that he is completely unaware of ignorance in which ordinary people live.

72. Like the ever-full ocean, that remains unmoved and stands still as waters enter, in the same way, he in whom all desires enter but who remains unmoved attains peace, and not he who cherishes desires.
SUMMARY VERSE:

The most amazing, indeed, is the movement of the mind. Through (the process of) giving up one object it jumps to other ones, taking thus recourse to (new) objects that are again to be given up.

अथ संग्रहस्लोकः
अहो तु चेतसंक्षरा गतिस्यायणे यक्तिल
आरोह्येव विषयायन्यंतास्तु परित्यज्ये॥ २ ॥

CHAPTER 3

अथ: तृतीयोऽध्यायः

The nature of knowledge and action has been previously explained. At that time it was rightly pointed out that, on the path of liberation, knowledge plays the dominant role. Having this in mind, Arjuna asks the following question: If we accept the principle that the result of both good and bad actions should be abandoned (as laid down in chapter 2 verse 52), then why at all does one need to perform action?

18 This is because only actions of those who are established in knowledge are not instrumental in binding.
This is how the Lord answers this question.

3. As taught by Me since ancient times, O Blameless One, there are in this world two kinds of disciplines: the Yoga of knowledge for Sāmkhya and the Yoga of action for yogins.

In this world there are two well-known paths (on the road to liberation), i.e., Sāmkhya and Yoga. Sāmkhya is the path of knowledge and Yoga is the path of action. The Lord combines and presents both of these paths in one, because knowledge (jñāna) and action (kriyā) are the very nature of consciousness.

6. He who lives restraining his organs of action while in his mind dwelling on the objects of senses, he, possessing a deluded mind, is said to be a hypocrite.

Even if one refrains from performing action by his sense organs, he is still inevitably engaged in performing action on the mental level. To attempt to abandon mental activity would be foolish because it is not possible to abandon mental activity.
7. But he who controls his senses by the mind and without attachment engages his organs of action in the yoga of action, he is superior, O Arjuna.

The expression ‘acts performed for the purpose of sacrifice’ (yajñārthāt) refers to the activity that one invariably needs to perform, i.e., duty. Other acts, on the other hand, are instrumental in binding. Duty that is performed without attachment to the results of actions does not bring results that are instrumental in binding.  

8. Perform the actions prescribed for you in the sāstras; action is surely better than inaction. Even the maintenance of your body could not be accomplished without action.

The Lord of creatures (Prajāpati), who is the highest reality (Paramātma), created his creatures together with action. He told them that generation of progeny is only possible through action (karman). He also declared that action (karman) would grant either liberation or bondage to the living beings. Liberation to those who act without attachment to the fruits of action and bondage to those who are attached to the fruits of action.

It is said that those who desire to attain liberation should enjoy the objects of the senses.

9. This world is bound by action, different from those performed as yajña. Free from attachment, engage in action for the sake of yajña.
11. Through yajña you should nourish the gods and those gods will nourish you. By nourishing one another you will attain the highest good.

The word gods (devāḥ 21) stands here for the function of the sense organs that possess a playful nature. In the sāstras dealing with the secret texts, gods are known as the Lords of the senses. You should satisfy these gods through action by engaging in the enjoyments of the objects of the senses as appropriate. When satisfied, these gods (in the form of sense organs) will grant you liberations (apavarga 22), according to the level on which you are established in your own self.

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this is that the entire universe is an expansion or manifestation of the one and the same consciousness. The material world, which is nothing but the gross or condensed aspect of consciousness, comes into existence as a result of reflection of the consciousness in the mirror of her own self. Everything that exists or will exist is already included within that consciousness. Everything that an ordinary person sees as existing outside of himself and therefore, separate from him, all of that to a realized yogin appears as identical with himself, or we can say that it appears as the extension of his own self. Therefore, there is nothing to reject because everything is one’s own self. In this context, the enjoyment of worldly objects (bhoga) is nothing else but the enjoyment of that same self present in that particular object.

21 The word devāḥ is derived from the root div, which means to play, to sport, to rejoice.

22 The word liberations (apavargas) in this context does not refer to perfect liberation (siddhi) but to a lower type of liberation.

Thus, continuous exchange of two contradictory experiences, i.e., gratification of the senses, which brings satisfaction, and samādhi, in which sense organs are reduced to one’s own atman, quickly bring the highest good. This is because these two experiences are mutually helpful. The highest good, however, is the experience of the highest reality (Brahman), in which the distinction between these two experiences is eliminated.

This is a means not only for attaining apavarga but also for achieving perfection (siddhi).

12. Nourished by yajña, the gods will give you the desired enjoyments. But he who enjoys these gifts without offering anything in return to them is merely a thief.

When the gods in the form of sense organs are pleased with the enjoyments offered to them through sacrifice (yajña), then they will become present in the objects of one’s meditation. When this operation takes place, the objects of enjoyment (become present before us) through the sense organs, and can be experienced through memory, desire (samkalpa), or meditation, etc. 23

Because of the fact that the sense organs give us the objects of enjoyment, we should give the same back to them. If however, one does not reciprocate and fails to give back the same to them for their own enjoyment, then such a person is a thief. The Lord has already used the word ‘hypocrite’ for such a person.

23 This is because the objects exist only in relation to one’s sense organs and atman.
He who desires perfection (siddhi) or mokṣa by easy means should enjoy the objects of enjoyment available to him only with the idea in mind to bring about detachment by fulfilling the curiosity of the senses.

13. The good men, who eat the remains of the yajña, are prepared from all sins. On the other hand, sinners who prepare food for their own sake eat their own sins.

Those who enjoy the objects of enjoyment just as their duty following the śāstric injunction, and who take them only as intermediate activities which do not give any independent results; and who ‘eat’ (āśnanti) (that is, who are established in the very heart of their consciousness) ‘the remains’ (avasīṣṭam) (which is food characterized by the bliss created as a result of abiding in one’s own self, which is one’s own innermost heart) of ‘sacrifice’ (yajña) (which is characterized by the gratification of the groups of gods in the form of sense organs); these kinds of people who desire the enjoyment of objects just as a means to achieve that bliss (of being established in one’s own self) are freed from both good and bad impressions. On the other hand, those who under the influence of ignorance mistake the enjoyment of gross objects as the highest and therefore think, “We are doing everything for our own sake”, such people are stained by the good and bad impressions.

14. All creatures come into existence from annam; annam comes from parjanya; parjanya comes from yajña and yajña is born of action (karman).

15. Know that action comes from the Brahman. The Brahman springs from the imperishable (aṅkṣaram). Therefore, the all-pervading Brahman is ever established in yajña.

From annam which is an undivided object of experience and
which has other synonyms such as mâyā, avidyā, kâla, etc., emerge the multitude of creatures. Annam comes from parjanya who (as the enjoyer of the object) is of the nature of consciousness. This is because the objects of enjoyment gain their existence only as a result of their contact with the enjoyer. Parjanya becomes the enjoyer through sacrifice, which is the act of enjoyment. The act of enjoyment is the result of freedom (svātṛntṛya) of the kriyāśakti 25 of Parameśvara. This absolute freedom (svātṛntṛya 26) is the unbroken flow of consciousness because of her permanent contact with the highest Brahman, who is nothing else but Mahēśvara. This Mahēśvara, who possesses the fullness of the power of freedom and who is unlimited and eternal, gets manifested outwardly through this power of freedom (svātṛntṛya). This highest reality, i.e., Brahman, who manifests itself externally and is pure and unlimited, comes from the imperishable (aksaram), which is the singleness of consciousness in which all the waves of his glory come to rest.

Thus, this sacrifice is well disposed, which while carrying the six-spoked wheel of liberation through the upward facing triangle of this (six-spoked wheel), and by the downward facing triangle grants worldly enjoyments. Thus, the Brahman, who looks magnificent because of surging waves of both knowledge and ignorance, is based in the act of enjoyment.

self by creating an illusion of individuality. This is accomplished through five 'kañcukas. Niyati binds an individual self by creating the impression that he is bound by the law of cause and effect. Kāla binds an individual self by creating the impression that one is bound by time. Vidyā binds an individual self by creating the impression that one possesses only limited knowledge, which is dominated by the notion of duality. Kāla binds an individual self by creating the impression that he possesses only limited power of action. Rāga limits the individual self by creating the impression that he is not full or complete but possesses limited nature. It is because of this impression of limitation that one feels a need to possess various objects, which in turn would help him regain his fullness. This is the reason why one develops desire and attachment for various objects.

25 Kriyāśakti is a power of action of Śiva through which he brings about the manifestation of the variety of beings, which appear distinct from the Creator and mutually different from each other.

26 Svātṛntṛyasakti is the absolute freedom or autonomy of Śiva responsible for creation. As the principal power of Śiva, svātṛntṛyasakti contains within herself all other powers that will bring creation into existence. The process of creation is the result of the outward flow of bliss, which is the very essence of svātṛntṛyasakti.

Other commentators have explained this verse in the following way. The food-stuff (annam) is responsible for the creation of various creatures through the process of production of blood and semen. And this food-stuff comes from a rainy cloud (parjanya), which in turn comes from sacrifice. Sacrifice comes from action, action from knowledge and knowledge from the imperishable (aksaram).

Yet others explain that the multitude of creatures are sense organs, which (for their enjoyment) depend on the five-fold objects of enjoyment. These five-fold objects of enjoyment are a manifestation of the ātman. Therefore, the ātman himself is nourished by the process of enjoyment of objects, and the omnipresent Brahman is established in action because it is made of action.

एवं प्रवत्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तवतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामौ मोघं पार्थ स जीवित ॥ १६ ॥

16. He who does not here on earth follow the wheel thus revolving, whose life is sinful, who lives for the gratification of the senses, he lives in vain, O Pārtha.

यस्येवं नाश्चक्ररोति स पापमयः ।
यतः स इत्द्रियेऽथं रम्यं नात्मनि ॥ १६ ॥

One who doesn't accept this well-established path is a sinner because he enjoys only in the field of senses but not in the ātman.

यश्चात्मरितवेच स्यादात्मतुस्मर्थ मानवः ।
आत्मवेषं च सनुस्ततस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

17. But he who rejoices in the ātman alone, who finds satisfaction in the ātman, who is content only in the ātman, for him there is no action that he needs to do.

नैव तस्य कृतेवार्थि नाकृतेवेह कक्षाः ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कष्टिद्वर्धितापश्चर्घः ॥ १८ ॥

18. Neither has he anything to gain from the actions he has done or from the actions left undone; nor is there any living being on whom he needs to rely for any purpose.
22. If I did not tirelessly continue to engage in activity, O Pārtha, then men would follow my example in every way.

23. If I would not perform action, these worlds would perish and I would be the cause of confusion and of the destruction of these creatures.

24. Therefore, remaining unattached, always perform the action which is your duty. Engaging in action truly unattached, man attains the Supreme.

25. While the unwise act because of their attachment to action, O Bhārata, so the wise should also act, but without any attachment, desiring the welfare of the world.
27. Actions are performed by the guṇas belonging to Prakṛti, each following their own individual role. He whose mind is confused by the sense of ‘I’ thinks, “I am the doer.”

28. But he who knows the truth about the distinction between the guṇas and actions, O Mighty-armed, thinking, “The guṇas act among the guṇas”, remains unattached.

29. Those deluded by the guṇas of Prakṛti are attached to the actions of the guṇas. He who possesses knowl-
edge in its totality should not disturb the ignorant, who possesses only partial knowledge.

A foolish person plunges himself into activity (that is actually performed by three guṇas) because of the influence (power) of Prakṛti. Therefore, it has been stated earlier that one should perform action while being fully established in yoga.

In the following verse, the Lord will make it clear how that is to be accomplished.

30. Surrendering all actions to me, with the mind resting in the highest Self; freed from desire and the sense of ‘mine’, fight, relieved from the mental fever.

With the understanding, “I am not the doer”, the yogin surrenders all activities to the Lord. He understands that the fully independent highest Lord is the doer of everything and that the yogin himself does nothing. Such a yogin, desiring to educate people, engages himself into activity as if he is fighting a war.

31. Those men who always practice this teaching of mine, who are possessed of faith and who do not look for any fault in it, they too are released from action.
Prakṛti, and the ātman is by nature not involved in any activity. Therefore, there is nothing to be caught into the circle of births and deaths.

Then how is it possible that people believe ātman to be bound? The Lord explains:

इन्द्रियस्येत्यस्यार्थं रागः स्वविनियतोऽवर्त्त्योऽस्मिन् परिपरिविधयोः।
तयोऽन्तः वशर्गाणवः स्त्रयः परिपरिविधयोः। ३४

34. The senses possess attachment and aversion in relation to their object; man should never come under their sway, for both indeed are his enemies.

श्रेयान् स्वधर्माः विरूणः परिस्थितिनुशितात्।
स्वधर्माः निधन्तः श्रेयः पराधान्यादाधिपः। ३५

35. It is better to follow one's own dharma, though imperfect, than to follow another's dharma even if well practiced. It is better to die following one's own dharma than the dharma of another which brings prosperity.

संसारी च प्रतिविषयं रागः द्वेषः च गुद्वाति। यतं: कर्माणि आत्मकर्त्तकार्यः
विवृत्ताः भिक्षुभिभिस्यते, इति सममिति भोजनादित्यन्वहारं कुर्वलोकिनंसंरिपिशरस्वयं
विशेषः। अर्थ न: सिद्धातं:—सर्वथा युक्तसंगमस्य स्वधर्मचारिणोऽभावः
कृषितस्यायग्यापात्मको बन्धः। स्वधर्मम् हि हद्यादि पापी स्वरसिरुडः एव। न तेन
कृषितम् रिक्तो जन्तुर्जायते—इत्यत्त्थः। ३५

A person who is bound reacts with attachment and aversion in regard to various objects. This is because such a person wrongly assumes that he performs action. Although both the yogin and an ordinary person are equally engaged in activity, such as eating, etc., still there is a difference between the two. The following is my theory: the yogin is not bound either by merit or by sin because he is devoid of attachment and performs only his duty (dharma). One's own dharma is deeply engrained in one's heart and can never be abandoned. There is no living being that is born without dharma. Therefore, both the yogin and the person who is bound cannot abandon their duty.

अर्जुन उवाच
अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूर्वः।
अनिष्कुमनोऽध्यपिब प्रलादाक्रम्येऽवियोगितेः। ३६

Arjuna said:

36. What is it that impels a man to commit sin, unwillingly even, as if propelled by force, O Varśneya?

पापं पापत्या विद्येष्ठी जनं कर्त्तवते इति प्राप्तः। अथ
प्रश्नोपायानेत्यपापायायः—स्वधर्मम् यदि स्वहदयादन्यायित्वाद्यायः
कर्त्तवः। तत्प्रथमात्मरणेऽवियोगितेः। कोर्त्तो स्वधर्माः नाम, चेतानिको जन्तुः—इत्युतं
भवति। ३६

अज्जर्तं 'सत्यं स्वधर्मं हृदस्या आग्नेयकावण्यः कृत्वं वित्त्व: न तु
तदः कावण्यः।'—इत्यपश्ये ये—

If one’s dharma is inseparable from a person, then how is it possible that one at all gets involved in sinful activity? Therefore, at this point, one could raise a question about the nature of dharma. What is the nature of dharma, which is said to be inseparable from all living beings?

The answer to this question is that calamity is not created by the absence of dharma, but by temporal concealment of that dharma which resides in the hearts of all living beings.

श्रीभगवानुराच
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्रः।
महाश्रो महापापमा विद्येष्टते। ३७

The Lord said:

37. This is desire, this is anger, and its source is the rajas guna, all consuming and most evil. Know this to be the enemy here on earth.

श्रीभगवानुराच
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्रः।
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The Lord said:

37. This is desire, this is anger, and its source is the rajas guna, all consuming and most evil. Know this to be the enemy here on earth.
Lord Kṛṣṇa will answer these questions in the following way:

Shriśrīvaṁśa

एव सूक्ष्मः पर: श्रद्धंहिनामिनियोऽहः।
सुखतन्त्र इवासीनो मोहयन्यार्थ तित्तुति।

The Lord said:

39. O Son of Pārtha, kāma and krodha are subtle and are the biggest enemies of embodied beings along with the sense organs. They abide in the mind as if to increase the happiness, but in reality they exist to delude.

एव तांतुसूक्ष्मः—उत्पत्तिसमयेऽलक्ष्यं इन्द्रियेऽ।
एवं च वर्त्तमानं सुखं तन्त्रं च दितंभोतप्तदेहं।
तस्मात् दुःखमोहयम्—तामसस्वच्छ।

Both desire and anger are very subtle (sūkṣmaḥ). This is to say that they cannot be noticed at the time when they appear in the senses. During their existence they appear as if they were born to increase one’s happiness. However, in reality, they are products of suffering and delusion because they are of the nature of tāmas.

कामक्रोधमयो घोर: स्वत्भवर्गमुद्यवः।
अहृत्योधिप्रभावमत्स्तः पापकम्भिषः।

40. This horrible enemy in the form of desire and anger is born from the satisfaction of belonging to a particular family; it is of the nature of arrogance rooted in the sense of egoism, difficult to cross by the sinful ones.

स्वत:—कुलाधिबन्धम: ततकः यो हर्षः—‘आहमीद्याः’—इति।
अत एवह—आहं करि: इति।

The word stambhaḥ refers to the feeling of pride or arrogance for belonging to a powerful family. From that pride satisfaction is born, as when one feels, “I am like this, I am powerful, etc.” Therefore, it is said that this enemy is rooted in the sense of egoism.
41. This enemy destroys one’s happiness, it creates misery, and by continuously deluding one, makes him fear.

Therefore, kāma and krodha increase because of pride. They are of the nature of arrogance, which is rooted in the sense of egoism. They are born from the feeling of satisfaction (sukha buddhi). This is how the Lord answers Arjuna’s three questions.

42. This despicable and disgraceful enemy is always in search of loopholes, O Winner of the Wealth; it is of the nature of delusion coming out of rajas, and it represents the biggest problem for human beings.

43. As fire is enveloped by smoke and a mirror obstructed by dust, as an embryo is enveloped by the womb, so is the ātman covered by desire and anger.

By these three examples the characteristics of desire and anger are pointed out. The first characteristic is that it is difficult to get rid of them. The second, it propels one to perform wrong activity. And the third, that it is liable to criticism because it abides in a shameful place. The pronoun ayam in the verse stands for the ātman.

By all means a wise man is possessed of knowledge. O Son of Kunti, knowledge is veiled by anger, that eternal enemy of the wise, being of the nature of desire and as insatiable as fire.

Anger is described as kāmarūpa, i.e., possessing the form of desire, because it lives and flourishes in desire. Anger is like a fire that one can never satisfy because it burns one’s happiness in this as well as in the other world.
45. The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be the seat of this eternal enemy. Knowledge is veiled by these, which delude the dweller in the body.

First, anger appears in the sense organs of living beings, for example, when the eyes perceive the enemy. This perception first creates anger in the organ of perception, i.e., the eye. Then anger enters the mind in the form of desire. Then it enters the intellect (buddhi) where the decision is to be made about the nature of the reaction towards the enemy. In this way, anger creates confusion and destroys knowledge.

In the next verse, the Lord explains the means for removing anger:

46. Therefore, having first restrained your senses, O Best of Bharatas, eliminate this evil, the destroyer of both right knowledge and right action.

47. The senses are different from their objects and the mind is different from the senses; yet intellect is distinct from the mind, and that which is beyond even the intellect is the âtman.

48. Thus having known him who is beyond the intellect and having stilled the self by the self, O Mighty-armed, kill the enemy in the form of desire, difficult to conquer.
Senses differ from their objects of experience, such as a person who is perceived as an enemy. Mind differs from sense organs, and intellect from mind. Furthermore, atman has an entirely different nature to the intellect, etc. Thus, having this in mind how can it be possible that mind, intellect and atman could be disturbed by the anger created in the sense organs? One should carefully contemplate this point.

Those who are initiated in esoteric teachings understand this (verse) in the following way. That which transcends buddhi is the highest egoism (parahankara), which is characterized by the experience, “I am all this universe”. This experience is the experience of the highest non-dualism. Therefore, that which is complete in itself (because it does not possess parts) cannot conceive the notion of difference that comes out of anger. Therefore, having attained the experience, “I am all this universe”, which is of the nature of highest consciousness, one should get rid of anger which is an enemy in the form of ignorance.

SUMMARY VERSE:

One who approaches one’s wealth, wife or even one’s body with a sense of difference from his real nature, what kind of harm could be done to such a person by the changing nature of his mind?

Although the science of yoga was passed down by the tradition of teachers, at the present time however, this knowledge is lost. By this verse, the Lord shows the glory of this knowledge as well as the difficulty to possess it.

3. This same ancient science of yoga, I have today imparted to you because you are My devotee and My best friend. This science of yoga is indeed the secret supreme.
Arjuna said:

4. Your birth was later and the birth of Vivasvat was earlier; how should I understand that you really did teach yoga in the ancient times?

The Lord said:

5. Many births have taken place for Me as well as for you, O Arjuna. I know all of them but you do not, O Scorcher of Enemies.

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27 Anvācyā is one of the four possible meanings of the particle ‘and’ (ca). When used in its anvācyā sense the particle ca connects two items that are not of equal importance.
9. My birth and My activity are of divine nature. He who knows this reality is not reborn, and after leaving his body comes to Me, O Arjuna.

My birth comes through My own mâyâ (âtmamâyâ) and knowledge of yoga, and it is the result of My own power of freedom (svâtantryaâsakti). Therefore My birth is of divine nature and it is not the result of past actions. However, in the case of the Lord, actions are also divine because they do not bring about fruits. One who knows this reality and is capable of perceiving this reality in his own self undoubtedly knows the real nature of the Lord, Vâsudevatattva.

10. Many, freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the austerity of knowledge, have become one with Me.

Those whose anger, etc., has been extinguished — because all of their desires have been fulfilled on account of their identification with the Lord and because they perform their duties without expecting their fruit — they know the Lord in his real nature.

11. In whatever manner men take refuge in Me, in that same way I favor them. Everywhere, O Partha, men follow My path.

Those who seek My shelter with whatever understanding they might have about My nature, I bless all of them by taking that particular form which also belongs to me.

All beings follow My path whether knowingly or unknowingly (lit. tr.: absorbed or unabsorbed in Me). The path of sacrifice such as jyotiśoma, etc., is not a different path, i.e., it is not the path that doesn’t lead to the Lord. Everything in the universe follows the Lord’s desire. This idea will be further explained in verse 13 when the Lord will say, “I am the creator of a system based on four castes.”

Other commentators explain that the word anuvartante, although used in the present tense, conveys the meaning of the injunctive. As in the Vedic injunction, “One takes a sodâsina pot during the ritual called atirâtra.” Here the verb ‘(they) take’ (grhnanti) is used in the present tense but it stands for the injunctive, i.e. they should or may take a sodâsina pot. It is the same with the verb anuvartante, which is in the present tense but stands for the injunctive, meaning they all should follow My path.

12. People desiring fulfillment of ritual acts make offerings to the gods here on Earth. Quickly comes the success born of action in the world of human beings.
Only in the world of human beings is there a possibility of reaching perfection in both enjoyment and liberation.

13. I am the creator of a system based on four castes according to the division of guṇas and actions. Though I am its creator, know Me to be the non-doer and imperishable.

Therefore, having purified yourself with this understanding, you should also perform action, which is your duty.

Now, if somebody would say that perfection could be reached only by remaining inactive, we would reply that this is not correct understanding. Because:

But if you say that action is artificial, then it is a lie. For the sum of work is the real essence of knowledge.

14. Actions do not smear Me, nor have I any desire for their fruits. He who truly recognizes My real nature is not bound by actions.

How could I who am equal to ākāśa be associated with any action? The Lord is compared here with ākāśa because he is free from any desire. How can one who takes refuge in the Lord and who is always and under all conditions aware that there is nothing else but the Lord, who is the abode of bliss, be bound by action?

15. Having known this, even the ancient seekers desiring liberation performed action; therefore, you too perform action, as did the ancients in old times.
It is difficult to know the difference between action and inaction. Even in the cause of performing (right) action, defects are inevitable. For example, during the performance of agniṣṭoma sacrifice the killing of animals is involved. Similarly, in the case of performing prohibited action something good is accomplished. For example killing a wild animal, which terrorizes people, brings about relief to these people.

Even if one doesn't perform action, action is still either auspicious or inauspicious. This is because the action is inevitably present on the level of speech and thought. It should be pointed out here that action can only be given up through knowledge.

Even a learned person, due to the mysterious nature of action, cannot be sure which good action will bring about good results. Or, by performing which action he will not be able to attain liberation. Only knowledge (vijñāna), which arises from taking refuge in the Lord, is capable of drying up the fuel of both good and bad actions. This knowledge (vijñāna) will be explained later.

In order to further clarify this point the Lord said:

18. He who perceives inaction in his own action, and in the action of others perceives his own actions, is wise among men. He is established in yoga and is the performer of all actions.

The use of the word karmāṇi indicates that a person with his mind pacified perceives inaction in his own actions because he realizes that he is not the doer. On the other hand, the use of the word akarmāṇi indicates that in the actions of others, he perceives his own actions. This is because such a person has fully realized his own nature. In this verse, it is also pointed out that among all people such a man is wise because he performs all actions. Having this in mind, how could it be possible for one permanently established in yoga to reap the fruits of his actions?

Therefore, when he is active he is the doer of all actions, and when he is in samādhi (praśāntave) then he is entirely free from all actions. This is the reason why the Lord said that although he is doing everything, he is not performing anything. Or, while doing nothing he is doing everything.

19. He whose every undertaking is free from desire and motive, whose actions are burnt in the fire of knowledge, him the intelligent call wise.

The action performed by a yogin who has burnt his (strong) desires in the fire of knowledge will not bring any results. The nature of this (burning of the desires) has already been described and will further be described in upcoming pages.

20. Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of action, always contented, depending on nothing, even while fully engaged in action he does not act at all.
The use of the expression ‘even while fully engaged in action’ (abhipravṛttotp) indicates that a yogin is active as much as it can be perceived by the sense organs of other people. However, in reality he remains inactive.

21. Performing action with his body alone, expecting nothing, having abandoned all possessions, his heart and mind controlled, he incurs no sin.

Physical activity is such activity which involves operation of the senses and is useful for maintaining a body. Physical activity is not necessarily directly associated with mind or intellect.

22. Satisfied with whatever comes to him spontaneously, transcending the pairs of opposites, free from envy, balanced in success and failure, even while acting, he is not bound.

The use of the passive voice in its reflexive sense (karma kartārī prayogah) indicates that the ātmā binds himself by himself by accepting impurities of impressions in the form of fruits of actions. Otherwise, the idea that karman binds ātmā is not appealing because karman is of an insentient nature and therefore cannot be instrumental in binding.

23. He who is freed from attachment, liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge and who acts for the sake of yajñā, his action is entirely dissolved.

In the verse, the word sacrifice (yajñā) is used in the singular in the sense of class noun (jātī). Characteristics of sacrifices (yajñās) will be explained later.

However, since the word ‘sacrifice’ is mentioned here, the Lord briefly describes its meaning.
highest secret according to my own understanding and according to the teaching of my teacher. Trying to understand this secret without oral tradition is like drawing a picture in the sky, as the highest secret will not reveal itself without oral tradition.

Some commentators explain that oblation, fire, instruments of sacrifice, such as ladle, etc., are all attributes of the Brahman. These commentators should be ignored because they are not familiar with the oral tradition regarding the highest secrets.

25. Some yogins, taking recourse to their own sense organs, perform sacrifice for their satisfaction, yet some take recourse to objects (subtle and gross) and offer oblation into the fire of the Brahman by means of pleasing words, sounds or touch.

A yogin who is established in śamādi, and whose śamādi is identical with the act of sacrifice (Brahmakarman), unavoidably attains gantavyam, the highest Brahman. In this context, Brahman is the object of knowledge (jñeyam), because only Brahman exists, outside of which nothing exists could be known.

If by the use of the pronoun tena (in the second part of the verse), the corresponding relative pronoun is understood, then the meaning of the verse would be as follows: the sacrificer, who is of the nature of Brahman, offers an oblation, which is of the nature of Brahman, into the fire, which is of the nature of Brahman, in order to please God, who is also of the nature of Brahman. This kind of sacrificial action (Brahmakarman) is called śamādi. By śamādi in the form of sacrificial action nothing else can be attained but Brahman, because sacrificial action is a means for attaining Brahman. Thus, the earlier statement, “In whatever manner men take refuge in me” (chapter 4, verse 11) is justified.

It is said that those who do not realize the real meaning of sacrifice attain only limited results, because they are limited by their limited desire. On the other hand, how could those who know the real nature of sacrifice as being unlimited and perfect attain limited results?

This verse as well as other verses in this text expresses the highest secret. Although I possess a limited mind, I have explained this

31 This would mean that oblations, fire, instruments, etc., are not identical with the Brahman but are its attributes.
plating at the very root of this experience attain their own self. These yogins under all circumstances remain established in yoga. This is precisely why such a person is called a yogin. The suffix *in* (in the word *yogin*) is used by the sage Vyāsa to give this word a sense of permanent union.

Some commentators explain this verse to mean the following: Other yogins offer this sacrifice of experiencing objects by means of sacrifice of the same type into the insensitiated fire of the *Brahman*. However, I will comment on this verse in a way which is not in contradiction with what is said previously or that which will be said in the future. Some, having been established in yoga, perform external sacrifice with the sole view of pleasing gods such as Indra, etc., that possess many forms. They perform external sacrifices with the notion that this is their duty and not with any desire for the results.

Yet other yogins surrender even that to the insensitiated fire of the *Brahman*. Thus, even external sacrifices finally reach the highest *Brahman*. This is the reason why the Lord will say, “All these are knowers of sacrifice”. It is also stated in the Vedas, “The gods perform sacrifices by sacrifices.”

26. Some offer senses like hearing and others in the fire of restraint; some offer sound and other objects of the senses in the fire of the senses.

 counterparts:—man:—tasya veśam—
pratiprabhavabhavanyāsū prabhavāparbhatam prabhavāprabhatam.
At eva te tapoṣāḥ: śānta-prāṇaparipāyināṁ bhikṣuyaśca prāṇaparipāyinām bhikṣuyaśca.
Tatha ca māyām slimām prakriyāyamucyate.

‘न भोग्यं व्यःतिरं हि भोक्तुस्यते विभवते।
एव एव हि भोगो यत्तद्वायं भोक्तुभोगयोः।’

The objects of enjoyment are not different from you, the enjoyer. The real enjoyment is the identity of object of enjoyment and enjoyer.

It is also said:

It is the highest experiencer himself, who always and everywhere abides in the form of the object of experience, i.e., the universe. (*Spanda Karika*, II. 4)

27. Others offer all the activities of the senses and of the *prāṇa* in the fire of the yoga of self-restraint, kindled by knowledge.

Others offer sense organs into the fires of restraint. It is the mind (manah) that is restrained (samyah). In that restrained mind the *manah* is the fire in the form of sparks (of mind), which fire is generated. This fire have attained abstract form and which are instrumental in drying up all the desires. Sense organs are offered into these sparks. These kind of yogins are called *tapayajñāḥ*, i.e., those for whom *tapas* is sacrifice.

There are yet other yogins, who surrender objects of the senses into the fire of sense organs, which is lit by knowledge and burns the impressions of past actions. The secret of these yogins is that they desire to enjoy objects for the sake of giving up the desire of enjoyment. As I said in my *Laghvī Prakriyā*:

32 *Laghvī Prakriyā* was a devotional *stotra* written by Abhinavagupta which is no longer available.
28. Some likewise perform sacrifice by means of material possessions, by tapas and by the practice of yoga; while other yogins of rigid vows offer as sacrifice the study of the scriptures and knowledge.

Thus, dravya yajña, tapo yajña and yoga yajña have been explained. In the following verses svādhya yajña and jñāna yajña will be explained.

अपाने ज्ञतिः प्राणां प्राणेऽपानं तथाप्येत
प्राणापनगती रूढ्वा प्राणायमपरायणः || २९ ||

29. Others intend on control of the vital breath (prāṇa); having restrained the course of exhaling (prāṇa) and inhaling breath (apāna), they offer prāṇa into apāṇa and apāṇa into prāṇa.

अपेक्षिताना: प्राणानु प्राणेऽपां ज्ञतिः
सर्वेऽपेये यज्ञविद्य यज्ञक्षितकलः || ३० ||

30. Yet others, controlling the contact with the objects of experience, offer prāṇa into prāṇa. All these indeed are knowers of yajña, and through yajña their sins are cast away.

प्राण-उदयमां नाद नारू प्राणविवादाम्बरान्यां अपातेःअस्तं याति
स्वाजन्द्यः स्वेश्वाल्मीकरणां ज्ञतिः प्रधोधितेऽचरणाय। शिष्यालम्बम च
न्यायप्रबन्धात्मकै ज्ञतिः अस्तं यात्रमुदयमां संस्कृत तद्दीर्धारणां गर्वनीयात्
अलिनिः सिद्धार्थिने शोधनोपयोजनस्य यत्र यथाद्वयो यथा यथार्थद्वयः प्रतिष्ठितमानसः। अत्य एव यूकः प्रथमपुकः; च परमेन् रचिकः। प्राणमेत च पादेन प्राधवोपलाभमेत च प्रवेशो धनं ज्ञतिः। अतक्ष प्राणमेत प्रम्पुकः तत्र ज्ञतिः। एते एवोऽपहृतिप्रविष्टिनि परिश्रितसामर्थ्यमेत शिष्यालम्बमोकः; हेद्यथे गती निर्भ्राताः विष्णुप्रत्येकं नियम्य प्राणान्य-सकलविविधतिवृद्धस्य प्राणेऽपानेऽतिरिक्तः कुमाकारभाष्यायामनः। सर्वेऽधे द्रव्यालब्धिः ज्ञानान्यां
यज्ञ त्रितिः; तेनैव च स्रोतकल्पितः। समुद्रोऽनुसूचितपेदवादानाय-हातोऽहः || ३० ||

33 This quote from Vijñānabhairava throws further light on what Abhinavagupta attempted to convey in his commentary on this verse. The purpose of this particular verse of Vijñānabhairava is to instruct a practitioner to concentrate on the gap between two thoughts or perceptions. The mind is usually dominated by the variety of experiences manifested as thought, desire, etc. If, however, the mind is not allowed to develop another thought before the present one perishes and is able to
Prāṇa, assuming the form of primordial sound (nāḍa), which in its arising movement dissolves the morae (mātṛa) of AUM and other mantras into bindu, etc., 34 is offered into āpāṇa 35. However, by offering prāṇa into āpāṇa a yogin enters into the blissful state of his innermost self. This process is known as svādhyāya, which is capable of making one’s body steady. The same can be done in the presence of a disciple (śisyātmak ca 36). Through the process of unifying the self of a student with his own self, a teacher, by causing the disciple’s inhaling breath (apāṇa) to enter into his exhaling breath (prāṇa), generates the experience of liberation (apavarga) in the self of a disciple and in his own self. In this way he offers apāṇa into prāṇa in the fire of svādhyāya, which enables both to abide in the state of bliss. This teacher accomplishes through the process of purification, awakening, entering into the spiritual realm and complete unification with Śiva. Therefore, the inhaling breath (pūrāṇa) is mentioned first and the exhaling breath (recaka) is mentioned last. By the first quarter of verse 29 it is implied that objects of enjoyment should be internalised. By the second quarter, the coming out for the purpose of enjoyment following the path of mahāvidyadāttārānā, who conceive themselves as having no link with the body, is implied. Therefore, jñānayajña is different from svādhyāya.

Those who practice in this way and restrain the function of prāṇa and āpāṇa bring fullfilment to the mind of both student and teacher. They restrain the movement of prāṇa and āpāṇa by not receiving the objects of outside experience. They control the fluctuations of the mind, which is of the nature of prāṇa by offering it into the prāṇa, which is made up of the waves of surging parāṇanda and nirāṇanda bliss 37.

34 In the process of reabsorption, the mantra AUM, etc., goes through nine successive stages, i.e., bindu, ardhacandra, nirodhidā, nāḍa, nāḍānta, sakti, vyāpini, samanā and unnanā. For details see Netra Tantra, chapter 21.
35 Offering the exhaling breath (prāṇa) into the inhaling breath (apāṇa) is the everyday experience of all living beings.
36 I am not sure of this meaning and the following three sentences. These four sentences provide a description of the tantric initiation, which is hidden from the sight of all those uninitiated in its mysteries.
37 Abhinavagupta describes seven types of bliss, which are the result of different levels of yogic experiences. These seven types of bliss are: nījānta, nirāṇanda, parāṇanda, brahmāṇanda, mahānānta, cidāṇanda, jagadānanda. For details refer to Tantra Sāra, chapter 5 p. 38.

This is accomplished through the experience of the subtlest level of restrained breath (kumbhakaprasāntya). Therefore, practitioners of all sacrifices beginning with external sacrifices (dravyayajña) and ending with internal sacrifices (jñānayajña) are knowers of the real meaning of sacrifice. Through these sacrifices they become cleansed from all the sin. This is to say, the great delusion created by the impression of the notion of duality is completely uprooted together with its roots.

| यज्ञशिष्यामृतभुजो यति ब्रह्म सनातनसं ||
| नायं लोकोऽत्यज्ययस्य कुतोऽयः कुरुस्ततम || 31 ||

31. Eating the remains of the yajña, which is nectar, they reach the eternal Brahman. This world, O Best of Kurus, is not for him who offers no yajña, much less the world hereafter.

यज्ञेन शिष्यमहायज्ञविरुद्धपरावत्र अवश्यं—
स्वातम्मात्रारूपं परान्दनिरात्मकमूलं भुजाना अपि यथेच्छ संसूत्यने
ब्रह्मात्मायेति तदुपरममोऽत्त्वहस्यस्मुक्रक्कताणायतया: || अत्र च वहुतसं
हस्तरसोऽन्तः: सन्तीनिकृतोऽपि निविविदताभिक्षसबस्धातंसक्रियतम्ययात्मा
संप्रदायमहिमाभिन्दूताः च वच्चाणिरविविधवर्या भूतार्जगुवाहद्यतुः च प्रतिवर्धते।
अत्र च व्याज्ञातनस्य टीकाकारः: प्रदर्शितानि। तत्त्वमस्तुपादात्मकोऽर्काः
स्वमेव सवेच्छसः संप्रभाषयनं इति किमपि हन्ति व्याज्ञातनस्मुस्माणा
विनिहोऽने। तदुपरालमश्चक्राणमप्रकृतम् || 3१ ||

Here the compound word yajñaśīstam, could be taken in two different ways. First, it could be taken to mean that which is gained by means of sacrifice. Or, it could be taken to mean that which remains from the sacrifice, which is for the purpose of satisfying one’s sense organs. That which remains after the sacrifice (avaśīstam) is nothing but resting in one’s own self. And those who enjoy the nectar of immortality of their own self become creators like Brahmā, able to create anything according to their own sweet will.

Here I will stop revealing this secret because of the fear of saying too much and clearly revealing the highest secret. Although this verse contains the highest secret, it can still be revealed to those whose
dhātus are balanced by means of the great medicine in the form of tradition handed down by respected teachers when pleased by the service and deep devotion of their disciples.

In regard to this verse, other commentators have offered different commentaries. Their explanation and the explanation of my teachers should be analysed by good-hearted scholars. What could be accomplished by going through the trouble of pointing out the mistakes of others?

32. In this way, yajñas of many kinds are disclosed as a means of attaining the Brahman. Know them all to be born of action. Knowing thus you will find release.

It is stated that all types of sacrifice are a means for reaching the Brahman. It is also pointed out that all these sacrifices are associated with action. You (Arjuna), also knowing them, reach liberation by breaking away from bondage.

33. Better than the yajña performed exclusively by various materials is the yajña of knowledge, O Scorcher of Enemies. All actions without exception, O Pārtha, culminate in knowledge.

This reality can be known by homage (pranipātena) that is to say devotion (bhakti). This reality can also be known through repeated inquiry. That is to say through arguments and counter arguments as well as logical reasoning. This should be regularly practiced.

When you become purified through devotion, etc., then your own sense organs, being given the objects for their own enjoyment, will grant you the knowledge of reality. Therefore, these sense organs are called 'those that reveal the reality' (tatva darśinah). This is because the purification of sense organs brings about knowledge. It is said, “Yoga alone is the means for attaining yoga”. And “In that state knowledge is full of truth, reality” (Yoga Sūtra, chapter 1, sūtra 48).

According to other commentators, the word jñāninaḥ refers to people who possess knowledge. If this would be the case, then Lord Kṛṣṇa would not be the one who instructed Arjuna.
The purpose of interpreting the expression 'revelers of reality' in this particular way is to point out that other people can attain knowledge by purifying their sense organs through devotion, etc., and not by any other means.

35. Knowing this, O Son of Pāṇḍu, you will not fall into delusion again; and through this knowledge you will see all beings in yourself as well as in Me.

36. Even if you were the most sinful of all sinners, you would cross over all sinfulness by the raft of knowledge alone.

37. As a burning fire turns fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, in the same way the fire of knowledge turns all actions into ashes.

38. Truly in this world nothing exists as purifying as knowledge; he who himself has attained perfection in yoga, in time finds this knowledge within his own self.

39. He who possesses faith, who controls his sense organs, who is intent on it, attains knowledge. Once when he attains knowledge he quickly experiences supreme peace.

40. But the ignorant man who is without faith and possesses a doubting nature perishes. For the doubting man there is neither this world nor another, nor any happiness.
The renunciation of actions can only come as a result of yoga and not through any other means. This topic has already been discussed and will again be discussed.

42. Therefore, having eliminated this doubt born of ignorance and rooted in the heart with the sword of knowledge, resort to yoga and stand up, O Bhārata!

Having uprooted doubt, take recourse to yoga, which is skill in action. Therefore, stand up and perform the action, which is your duty.

SUMMARY VERSE:

Whichever act, preceeded by the desire inherent in the sense organs, one might perform, this act will make gods in the form of sense organs fulfilled and in return they will bless people with auspicious results.

देही श्रीमहायाहि श्राचार्यं वर्षराज्ञानं कथितवधिं उपाधिविचिते श्रीमुखदृढः तार्थं चौहळयायः || ४ ||

41. Actions do not bind a yogin, O Winner of Wealth, who has renounced action by means of yoga, who has eliminated doubt through knowledge and who has realized his own self.

योगसन्यासकर्मणं ज्ञासितश्रवल्लभसतं || ४१ ||

The purport of the entire chapter will be summarized in the last two verses.

समसमात्यनमत्तत्कर्मणि ज्ञानालं सतारं न कर्मणि निवधानं धनं || ४१ ||

To be made so that the fire of knowledge can become fully inflamed through the firm grasp of the right knowledge that is born of continuous practice. There is nothing as pure as knowledge. Only knowledge is pure by itself; the other things are pure only when in contact with knowledge. Here I will stop for the fear of revealing too much. Arjuna will know the purity of knowledge only when he becomes fully awakened. Increasing one's faith in this knowledge and making effort to attain it intensifies when one is free from doubt because of the firm belief in the Brahman. Therefore, he who does not doubt should follow the path of tradition of teachers, as they are instrumental in destroying all doubt. The nature of the doubt is to destroy everything. Therefore, one who doubts cannot know anything precisely because of the lack of faith. This is the purport of this verse.

The purport of the entire chapter will be summarized in the last two verses.

संसारसंविदकर्मणि ज्ञानसितमिकर्मणि || ४१ ||

The renunciation of actions can only come as a result of yoga and not through any other means. This topic has already been discussed and will again be discussed.

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हस्तथं ज्ञानानिनात्मन: || ४२ ||

42. Therefore, having eliminated this doubt born of ignorance and rooted in the heart with the sword of knowledge, resort to yoga and stand up, O Bhārata!

Having uprooted doubt, take recourse to yoga, which is skill in action. Therefore, stand up and perform the action, which is your duty.

अत संग्रहश्लोकः

विधेये कर्म यत्वं श्रवक्षिणं भाष्यायान्तोपवेदि || ४ ||

SUMMARY VERSE:

Whichever act, preceded by the desire inherent in the sense organs, one might perform, this act will make gods in the form of sense organs fulfilled and in return they will bless people with auspicious results.

देही श्रीमहायाहि श्राचार्यं वर्षराज्ञानं कथितवधिं उपाधिविचिते श्रीमुखदृढः तार्थं चौहळयायः || ४ ||
It should not be understood that san्‌न‌्‌y‌ś‌ś‌a and the yoga of action exist separately from each other. Both combined bring the highest good to living beings. However, in this relationship the yoga of action has the prominent role because san्‌न‌्‌y‌ś‌ś‌a is not possible without the yoga of action.

Arjuna asked: 3. He is known to be at all times established in san्‌न‌्‌y‌ś‌ś‌a, who neither hates nor desires and is free from the pairs of opposites; such a person is easily released from bondage, O Mighty-armed.

Therefore, only he who has renounced both passion and hatred from his mind could be considered to be at all times established in san्‌न‌्‌y‌ś‌ś‌a. This is because only an intellect freed from the pairs of opposites (nirv‌ä‌n‌d‌v‌a) such as anger and confusion could easily attain mok‌s‌a.

The Lord said:

4. Only the childish speak of the path of knowledge (Sän‌k‌h‌y‌a) and the path of action (Yoga) as different, but not the wise; he who properly knows only one gains the fruit of both.

The state attained by the followers of Sän‌k‌h‌y‌a is also attained by the practitioners of Yoga. He who sees Sän‌k‌h‌y‌a and Yoga to be one, he truly sees.
The yogin whose self has merged with the self of all the other living beings, although engaged in activity remains untouched by their results. This is because such a yogin is firmly established on the path of renunciation.

8. One who is established in yoga thinks, “I do not act at all”, even while engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, breathing or sleeping.

9. Talking, letting go, seizing, and even in opening and closing the eyes, simply thinking that the domain of the sense organs is only among the objects of sense.

10. He who acts offering all his actions to the Brahman and who has abandoned attachment remains untouched by sin as a lotus leaf by water.

The yogin, while fully engaging his sense organs externally (but remaining established in his own self), thinks (dhārayan), that is to say discriminates through his well-established knowledge in the following way, “How can I (who am identical with ātman) be affected by the sense organs, even at the time when they are engaged in experiencing their respective objects? How can actions performed by the sense organs, which are entirely different from my own self, affect...
13. Having mentally renounced all action, the dweller in the body lives in happiness, in the city of nine gates, neither acting nor causing others to act.

As a person who is sitting comfortably inside his house and is entirely oblivious to the outside changes on that house, such as the house getting old, etc., in the same way, the ātman, who is sitting in the house of the human body, which is decorated with nine windows such as the eye, etc., is unconcerned with that body.

14. The Lord creates neither the agency of action nor the actions of living beings; nor does He create the relationship between the doer, the action and its fruits; rather the very nature of things is to proceed with all of this.

एष आत्मा न किंचित्तस्यचिक्रोतिः। प्रवृत्तिस्वस्तयं स्वभावार्थं न कोलेयस्या।
तथाः। सांवेदनांत्यन्तर्यन्तरस्य भावतः प्रकाशान्तस्य-न्यायसार्थस्वभाववस्तुम्
स्वभावस्याश्रितसमस्तसत्त्वस्य निर्माणसंतुल्यं प्रकाशम्।
तयाः। तदात्माः कर्मानि कर्मश्च। कार्यसंस्थनम्।
कर्मेऽवं क्रिया। कर्मफलस्य।

The word naiśṭhikam here means permanent or lasting. Therefore, peace that is attained by a fully realized yogin stays with him forever.

अतः एवं क्रियात्वकर्मयोगं विभिन्नतत्तत्त्वभीष्टं नातिदुर्गमं कार्यं।

Paramātman does not perform any activity which is directed toward anything or anybody. The activity of the Lord is merely his
nature because it is not aimed at their results. The Lord, who is of the nature of consciousness, light, bliss and freedom (svātantra) and who brings about a series of creations, maintenance and destructions of the universe is never under any circumstances devoid of his nature. Thus, the doership (kārtrītvam) of the Lord is not different from him being a doer (kārtṛ).

If God did not possess the power of doership, then what would be the origin of action? In the absence of action, who would experience their results and what would then be the relationship between acts and their results? Here, in this context the word ‘action’ (karma) refers to acts and not to the objects of these acts. However, even if the objects of action were also included in the word karma, the meaning would not change. This is because the object attained by action is identical with the result of that action. For example, the act of moving around the stick and the wheel, etc., by a potter is not different from the consciousness of a potter. The action is not accomplished by the pot itself because the act of making a pot belongs to the sphere of consciousness of the potter. Therefore, it is the highest Lord who is the consciousness and freedom that is present in the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. The philosophy propounded here is that action and their results are not different from the Lord.

Thus, when both actions and their fruits do not exist as separate from each other, then what could be the result, both visible and invisible, of Vedic rituals? The Lord will make this point clear in the first part of the following verse. While in the second part, he will point out that actions and their results belong only to people plunged in worldly activities.

Thus, when both actions and their fruits do not exist as separate from each other, then what could be the result, both visible and invisible, of Vedic rituals? The Lord will make this point clear in the first part of the following verse. While in the second part, he will point out that actions and their results belong only to people plunged in worldly activities.

15. The Lord does not accept either sin or even merit of anyone; wisdom is veiled by ignorance, by which creatures are deluded.

Sin is not caused by Paramēśvara but by the ignorance of one who is engaged in sinful activity. As in the case of a person who, because of a doubt, mistakes nectar for poison.

Therefore, the Lord said:

16. But for those in whom ignorance of self is destroyed by knowledge, that very knowledge, like the sun, illuminates the highest reality.

When ignorance is destroyed by knowledge then the self-luminosity of knowledge is spontaneously established. As the self-lumi-
nous property of the sun is established when the light of the sun destroys darkness, similarly, when doubt is removed the nectar generates the effect of nectar by itself.

The destruction of ignorance takes place when intellect and mind are exclusively concentrated on Parameswara and when one renounces other activity. To clarify this point the Lord says:

तदुपेतदातिनन्वतिन्नस्विश्वास्तःपरायणः ।
गच्छ्वत्स्यपुरुषारृढः स्वानिधानांकृत्यः ॥ १७ ॥

17. They whose intellects are rooted in that, their innermost selves merged in that, who are established in that and are wholly devoted to that highest reality, cleansed of all impurities by knowledge, they attain the state from which there is no return.

स्मर्तोपि मुदृस्तेत्वतपृश्वतोपि स्वस्मर्यमिणः।
सक्ता अथ न सज्जन्ति एकं रविकरा इव ॥ १८ ॥

18. In spite of being continuously mentally and physically engaged in the activities of the world, carrying out their respective activities, yogins remain unattached like rays of the sun in a pool of mud.

यत् एवं स्वभावस्तु प्रवतिं इति; अतो ध्यानज्ञानान्मतं स्थितितित्याह—

After describing the nature of a yogin (born of this insight), the Lord will go on to describe the state of the mind of (such a yogin) whose ignorance has been removed. Therefore, he said:

विद्याविनयसम्पर्वे ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि।
शूनि चैव श्रापके च पंडिता: सम्पदायं: ॥ १९ ॥

19. The enlightened ones perceive the same in a brahmaṇa endowed with learning and humility, in a cow, in an elephant and even in a dog and in an eater of dogs (outcaste).

तथा चे: तेषां योगिनां ब्राह्मणे नेदरी बुद्धि:—'अस्य शुभ्रापदिनां
पुण्यवाविविप्यामि'—इत्यादि। गच्छि न पापानीमित्यादि। हस्तिनि नाधी:।
शुनि नाप्रावरतार्कतिदिनिनिष्ठयः। श्रापके च न पापाविविधानिदिष्टयः। अत्र एव समं
पश्यन्ति; नु व्यवहारन्ति। यदुकः
‘चिद्धर्मसर्वदेहेऽपि विशेषो नालिनुत्त्रिच्छिन्दुः।
अस्य तत्वसंसर्गमेवं भवायते ज्ञानभौत्तिकः॥ १९ ॥

तत्स्य चेत्तु संभावनेत्तथा—

The fully realized yogin does not think in his mind, “I will gain merit by serving a brahmaṇa.” He doesn’t believe that the cow is purifying nor is he entertaining thoughts that possessing an elephant is going to bring him wealth. The yogin does not believe that the dog is impure and that it might harm him. In the mind of such a yogin even the untouchable is not impure and sinful. He looks at all living beings as being equal. However, he does not necessarily act according to his insight 41. As it is said in Vijnānabhairava:

The same self in the form of consciousness is present in all the bodies; there is nowhere exception to this rule. Therefore, a yogin, realizing that everything is identical with that consciousness, rises above transmigratory existence.

(Vijnānabhairava, verse 100)

As indicated by the word ‘realizing’ (bhāvayati), the emphasis in this verse is also placed on knowledge and not on action.

In the next verse the Lord explains what kind of behavior could be expected from such a yogin.

न प्रहृदयेत् प्रियं प्रायं नोदितेत्रानुछारुपायां।
स्थिरबुद्धिसमूहो ब्रह्माविद् ब्रह्मि स्थित: ॥ २० ॥

20. He who possesses firm intellect, who is free from delusion, who is a knower of the Brahmaṇ and who is

41 In his day-to-day activities the realized yogin acts following the widely accepted social rules.
established in the Brahman should not rejoice on obtaining what is pleasant nor tremble on obtaining what is unpleasant.

For a yogin, who treats all living beings equally, the division of people into friends and enemies, etc., is only external. However, internally he is permanently established in the Brahman.

21. He whose self remains untouched in contact with external objects, who rejoices in his own self, whose self is merged with the Brahman through yoga, he enjoys eternal happiness.

The word bāhyasparsāh refers to the contacts with the outside objects, that is to say, to the objects existing in the outside world.

Such a yogin thinks in the following way:

22. All pleasures born of contact with external objects are only sources of sorrow, since they have a beginning and an end, O Son of Kunti; the enlightened one does not find pleasure in them.

23. He who is able to endure, even here, before leaving his body, the excitement born of desire and anger, is established in yoga and is known as a happy man.

For such a yogin, it is not difficult to maintain this kind of attitude (toward the experiences caused by external objects) till the time he drops his body. This is because he knows that if for a short time he tolerates the feeling born of desire and anger, then he will attain permanent happiness.

24. He whose happiness is within, whose delight is within and whose light is within, that yogin having become one with the Brahman attains complete perfection in yoga.

Therefore, a yogin who has no concern with any outside objects rejoices (happiness of that very experience) internally. There (internally), he finds happiness and receives enlightenment. However, in everyday activity he appears as if he is a fool. As I said in my Paramārthasāra: “He may move about posing as an idiot” (verse 71).
25. *Rsis*, whose sins are attenuated, whose doubts are destroyed, who are self-controlled and take pleasure in promoting the welfare of all creatures, attain identity with the *Brahman*.

Identity with the *Brahman* (*brahmanirvāna*) can be attained by yogins whose knots of duality and doubt are destroyed.

26. Ascetics, freed from desire and anger, who control their mind and have realized the Self, remain united with the *Brahman* in all the states of consciousness.

The yogin is fully established in the *Brahman* in all the states of consciousness 42 and at no time is he disconnected from the highest reality.

Placing the contacts with external objects outside of himself (*bāyahasparsān bahih kṛtvā*) in this context means that a yogin does not accept impressions created by that contact. The expression ‘in between the eyebrows’ (*bruvoh*) refers to the right and left eye that symbolically stand for anger and attachment. All the sense organs, which in this verse are referred to by the word ‘eye’ (*caksus*) should be placed on the spot in between (*antarē*) the two eyes, which is untouched by anger and attachment.

*Prāṇa* and *apāṇa* here stand for merit and demerit, i.e., good and bad impressions. A yogin possessing a balanced mind gives the same importance to both of them. The word nose (*nāśa*) refers to the mind-stuff (*cittavṛtti*) because it operates unevenly or unbalanced as a result of anger, etc.

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42 The yogin who has realized his own self and is permanently established in *Brahman*, never and under any circumstances loses this state of consciousness. This state of consciousness in the *Kashmir Shaivism* system is technically called *turyātita*. Kṣemarāja describes this state in his introduction to the eleventh *sūtra* of the first book of the *Śiva Sūtra*. He writes, “The Yogi in whom the rapturous experience of I-consciousness which is full of the consciousness of non-difference shines through the cancellation of the universe (as something separate from consciousness) by the process of uniting with the group of *saktis* through constant awareness in all the three states of waking, dream, and deep sleep which have been explained both from the point of view of the common folk and the yogi, enters the turyātita state (i.e. the state beyond the turya) which has been previously described as *caitya* by following up the stream (of that rapturous experience of I-consciousness).” (Translated by Jaideva Singh)
This kind of yogin although engaged in activity is completely free.

श्रीभगवानुवाच
अनाश्रय: कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्मं करोति य:।
संयत्सारं च योगी च न निरग्रिनं चाक्र्यः॥ १॥

The Lord said:
1. He who performs the action that is his duty, without depending on the fruit of action, he is a saṁnyāsin and a yogin, not he who has renounced his household fires and who refuses to perform sacrifices.

यं संयतसमिति प्रारुचिं तं विद्वा पाण्डव॥
न दाशसमयस्तः योगी भवति कङ्कण॥ २॥

2. That which they call saṁnyāsa, know it to be yoga, O Son of Pāndu, for no one becomes a yogin who has not renounced desire.

एवं प्राकानेनाध्यायणे साधितोऽध: श्लोककर्तवे निग्रहते, कार्यः—
स्वजात्याधिविहितम्। 'संयतसारं' इति 'योगीं' इति च पर्यायवैती। अत एवं यं संयतसमिति।
ततादा च—योगिनमनायणं संयताः नोपपद्यते, परस्त्रसम्यक्ष्यं विना योगो न युञ्जते।
तत्त्वात्संस्तसंस्तं योगसंस्त्याः। न निरग्रिष्ठिताधिनिष्ठ्यां
ध्वनिते—निराकृतेन न भवति, निविज्जयं न भवति, अथ च संयतसारं—
इतःद्वृत्तम॥ २॥

With these two verses, the Lord summarizes the philosophy that he taught in the previous five chapters. The word kārya in verse one
refers to duty, such as that of castes prescribed in various śāstras. Furthermore, the Lord explains that in this context the words yoga and samnyāsa are synonymous. Therefore, the Lord said, “that which they called samnyāsa, know it to be yoga.” In other words, samnyāsa is not possible without yoga and without renouncing desire (for the results of action) yoga is not possible. This is the eternal relationship between the two.

By the expression “Not he who has renounced his household fires (niragrihī) and not he who refuses to perform sacrifices (akriyā)” it is suggested that one cannot become a samānyāsī just by abandoning consecrated fires or by failing to perform sacrifices.

As a gambler, who while gambling can feel like a king, although (in reality) he does not possess a throne, in the same way, one who has simply abandoned performing activity can feel like a samānyāsī, while in reality he is not.

3. For the meditator desiring to attain yoga, action is said to be the means; the identifying marks of a yogin who has attain yoga is his ability to continuously abide in the highest state.

The word muneḥ in the genitive case here means a meditator. The word action (karman) refers to obligatory action, i.e., duty. The word kārana, in the second quarter of the verse, refers to the means instrumental in accomplishing the state of yoga. The word tranquility (śama) is the continuous existence (abiding) in the highest state. The word kārana, in the fourth quarter of the verse, stands for the identifying marks of a yogin who has attained perfection in yoga.

The Lord further clarifies this point:

4. Only when a man is not attached to the objects of the senses or to actions for the purpose of attaining worldly objects and when he has renounced all desires, he is said to have attained yoga.

The compound word indriyārthāḥ stands for the objects of the senses. By the word karmāsu in the locative case, the acts for the purpose of attaining worldly objects are meant.

One should remain watchful in regard to this point and should never indulge in the enjoyment of objects.

5. Man should uplift himself by his ātman and should never make himself weak; his ātman is his own friend, his ātman alone is his enemy.

In this regard, ātman is the only means for attaining liberation. However, in this verse, the word ātman stands for the mind (and not the self).

6. He who has himself conquered his mind is his own friend, but the mind of him who fails to conquer it will behave with enmity like a foe.
The conquered mind is a great friend of all, because it is instrumental in extracting one from the horrifying experience of continuous births and deaths (samsāra). The uncontrolled mind is an enemy because it keeps one down in a horrible hell.

In the next verse the Lord describes the nature of a yogin who has conquered his mind.

7. He who has conquered his mind, who is fully pacified, who does not perceive difference between himself and others, and who is steadfast in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain, in honor and disgrace,

8. That yogin is said to be established in yoga who is fulfilled in śāstro knowledge and who practices that knowledge in activity, who is unshakable, master of his senses, for whom clay, stone or gold are the same.

Knowledge (jñāna) is the state of the intellect which is free from mistake. (As it was previously explained) vijñāna is yoga of action about which there are various types of cognition (knowledge).
nected with us by blood. A yogin is required to give equal treatment to all of them. His mind should also remain balanced in dealing with saintly (sādhus) as well as sinful (pāpesu) people. This kind of yogin is distinguished (vidīṣyate) and eventually crosses over the saṁsāra.

10. Even in this life, the circle of birth and death is conquered by those whose mind is established in evenness. The Brahman is flawless, and the state of evenness. Therefore they are established in the Brahman.

Even while living in a body, yogins are capable of conquering the circle of births and deaths through evenness of their minds. They are not bound by this world because they are established in evenness, and evenness is the Brahman.

Now, if somebody asked the question, “How can we conquer our mind?” The answer to this question is that one who desires to attain mokṣa, i.e., to conquer his mind should be instructed in some yoga technique. This technique will make his body steady, which in turn will make his mind one-pointed.

11. The yogin should continuously practice yoga in seclusion, remaining established in his self, alone, his mind and intellect controlled, expecting nothing, without possessions.

12. The yogin should fix a stable seat for himself, in a clean place, neither very high nor very low, covering it with a cloth, a deerskin and kuṣa grass.

13. Seated on that seat, having made his mind one-pointed, with the activity of the senses and mind under control, the yogin should practice yoga for self-purification.

During the time of practice one first gets established in his posture (āsana). Then, one becomes capable of sitting in that posture for a long time. As a result of that, one’s mind becomes steady and stable.

14. Holding his body, head and neck upright and still, having directed his gaze to the tip of his nose, without looking in any direction,
17. Yoga is not for him who eats too much nor for him who does not eat at all, O Arjuna, it is not for him who is in the habit of sleeping too much nor for him who keeps awake.

18. For him who is moderate in food and play, moderate in performing actions, moderate in sleep and waking, for him is the yoga which destroys sorrow.

The expression ‘in food’ (āhāresu) stands for the objects that are being experienced or enjoyed. The word ‘play’ (vihārāḥ) refers to the inclination of the mind to enjoy these objects. Now the question is, what is the appropriate amount of this inclination of the mind for enjoying objects? The answer to this question is moderation, not too much enjoyment and not too much avoiding enjoyment. Moderation should be practiced not only with regard to eating, playing and sleeping but also in regard to all other activities as well. The remaining portion of the verse is self-explanatory and does not require further commentary.

Although the word jāgarataḥ is grammatically incorrect (the correct form is jāgrata), it should be taken as correct because this is written by the sage Vyāsa whose writing like Vedic texts is the highest authority. The same should be understood in other such cases.

19. When a yogin, with his mind completely controlled, is established in the self alone, freed from longing for any pleasure, then he is said to be established in yoga.
22. When a yogin experiences that infinite happiness, which lies beyond the senses and which is grasped by the intellect, he becomes established there and does not move away from that reality.

23. Having attained this, from which he cannot imagine any higher gain, established in which he cannot be moved even by deep sorrow.

24. That disunion of the union with pain should be known by the name of yoga. This yoga is to be practiced with firm resolve and an undejected mind or a mind which disregards worldly matters.

21. In that state, the motionless mind, settled through the practice of yoga, withdraws from the objects, and rejoices in the self by beholding the self through the self.
wealth, or getting a beautiful wife or a son. This is indicated by the expression 'no other gain' (aparo labhah).

The realization of yoga is in identifying one's mind with God, which brings about the highest happiness. Therefore, from the perspective of a yogin, other types of happiness are impermanent by nature and therefore not fulfilling. This is proved by the nature of the outside world, which is ever-changing.

It is stated in verse 23 that a yogin cannot be shaken even by extreme suffering. However, (at the time of distress) a yogin is shaken only for a moment because of past impressions. However, he is not shaken because of delusion (like an ordinary person) but because of the feeling of compassion towards other living beings. At the time of distress the deluded person thinks, "Alas, I am destroyed. What should I do to change my situation?" However, it was pointed out (in verse 24) that yoga is disunion of the union with pain. Therefore, the yogin who is continuously engaged in meditation (voktavyah) frees himself from suffering through faith (sraddhā) born from the firm belief in the existence of the Brahman. The word anirvinuccetasā refers to the yogin who is not dejected on the way to reaching his goal, as he engages in the practice with perseverance but feels utter dejection with regard to the matters of the world (anirvinuccetasā).

The means of abandoning desires is to abandon desires for obtaining a specific fruit (sankalpa).

25. Abandoning all desires together with sankalpa from which the incentive (to action) is born, controlling all of the senses on every side by the mind alone;

शाने: शेनैरपरमेद्वुःध्य धृतिगृहितया।
आत्मस्वपन्न प्र: कृत्तवा न किङ्क्शिदधि चिन्तयेत। II 26 II

26. As a result of the gradual practice, he should withdraw from the objects of the senses through the firmness of his intellect, and having established the mind in

the self let him not be concerned with either rejecting or accepting the objects of the senses.

One should abandon one's desires created by the mind, but should not stop being active. In this way, having attained firmness of intellect, (one) will gradually weaken the impressions of suffering, which are the result of desire. The word kincit in verse 26 indicates that one should not be concerned in either rejecting or accepting the objects of the senses.

Other commentators however, explain "na kincit api cintayet" to mean that one should not think of anything, including the highest reality. I do not particularly like this interpretation because it closely resembles Śaṅyāvāda Buddhism.

In the next verse, it is stated that freeing one's mind from attachment is not the only thing to be accomplished by the yogin.

यतो यतो निष्क्रियति मनःश्चिलमस्थिरम्।
तत्सत्तो नियम्यमेतान्यमेव शाम नयेतु॥ २७॥

27. Whatever makes the fickle and unsteady mind wander, from that it should be withdrawn and brought to rest in the self alone.

यतो यतो मनो निवसति, तत्तत्त्वस्मात्मानमेव आत्मनि शयेत। अन्यथा
अप्रतिष्ठ चिन्तन्तु पुनर्पति विचिन्तनांत्वावलम्बते॥ २७॥

From whichever object the mind moves away, after experiencing it, at that very moment, the mind should be purified by resting on the atman. Otherwise, the unstable mind will immediately attach itself to another object.
28. The highest happiness comes to the yogin whose mind is fully pacified, whose passions are stilled, who is one with the Brahman and pure.

29. Thus the yogin, who with his mind under control constantly engages in yogic practice, easily attains permanent union with the Brahman.

30. He who is established in yoga sees the same atman everywhere. He sees the atman present in all beings and all the beings in the atman.

One should meditate on that atman, which exists in all the beings (sarvesu bhutesu atmanam) in the form of the enjoyer (experiencer). One should get united with all beings in that atman through the knowledge that atman is present in the objects of enjoyment as well. Briefly, we can say that through this meditation, both yoga and the ability to see the self everywhere are realized. I have discussed this point in great detail in my Devistotra. 

31. He who sees Me everywhere, and sees everything in Me, I am not lost to him nor is he lost to Me.

Loss or disappearance (pranāsah) comes as a result of not performing any activity. The Lord runs away from him (the Lord is lost for him), who does not realize His omnipresent form. This is to say that the Lord does not reveal His own nature to such a person. He who does not realize that the entire universe exists in the Lord is forgotten by the Lord because there is nothing beyond that highest reality capable of manifesting this world.

However, the Lord is not lost for him who knows His omnipresent nature. This is because he knows that his real nature is identical with the Lord. Furthermore, he who perceives all things in the Lord is not forgotten by the Lord. This is because when the yogin’s perception is fully perfected he will be able to perceive the reality in its totality.

44 Devi Stotra Vivarana was Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the Devi Stotra of Anandavardhana. The commentary is no longer available.
32. The yogin who is established in unity and worships me who is present in all beings remains united with Me, regardless of the circumstances he lives in.

The fully realized yogin, through the experience of being united with the Lord, realizes his omnipresent nature. As a result of such knowledge, the yogin remains untouched by activity regardless of the conditions in which he lives.

33. He who sees equally, whether in pleasure or pain, his own self in everything, because it can be compared with his own self, he is deemed the highest yogin, O Arjuna.

The yogin experiences the pleasure or suffering of all beings as his own. In this verse, nothing new has been presented. It is a summary of what has already been explained.

34. This yoga taught by you as the ability to see one’s self in everything, O Madhusūdana, I do not see its supreme standing, because of the wavering of my mind.

35. For the wavering of the mind, O Kṛṣṇa, is disturbing, powerful and unyielding; I consider it difficult to control the mind, as it is the wind.

By the two pronouns ‘who’ (yah) and ‘this’ (ayam), it is indicated that the Brahman is both directly visible (ayam) and hidden to our sight (yat). The Brahman, although mentioned as clearly visible (as a result of the continuous practice of various upayās as taught by the tradition of teachers), is as good as invisible because of the instability of the mind.

The word pramāthi refers to that which disturbs both merit and demerit. The word balavat means ‘powerful’, and ‘strong’. The word drdham meaning ‘firm’ or ‘unyielding’ indicates that it is difficult to keep the mind away from getting involved in wicked activities.

In the next verse, the Lord explains how the mind can be controlled.

36. No doubt, O Mighty-armed, the mind is wavering and difficult to control, but by practice and non-attachment it is controlled, O Son of Kuntī.
Arjuna said:

38. One whose senses are not controlled but who is endowed with faith, his mind fallen from yoga; who although attached remains on the path of righteousness, confused on the path to attain the Brahman;

अनेकचितविभ्रान्तो गोहयौचिर वर्ण गतः।
अप्रायो योगसंसिद्धं का गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति॥ ३९॥

39. One whose mind is fluctuating, who is under the control of delusion, who has not attained yogic perfection; what is his condition hereafter, O Kṛṣṇa?

प्रायाधिगतात् यदि चलितेष्ठि पिच्छे अध्य न हिंसते, विनाश्योदी हि
सिद्धयोगोपि सर्वं निष्कल्पति कृष्ण।
उक्तं हि
‘यदा प्रायाधिपि विजहान्वि दृष्टं चितविभ्रातः
तदेव ध्याससं शीघ्रं तूलारसित्वान्तः।’ इति॥ ३९॥

Even if the yogin’s mind becomes unstable, he does not lose his faith because he has attained yoga. However, if the faith of a yogin is shaken all his efforts will go in vain, even if he has reached perfection in yoga. As it is said:

Even if knowledge is attained and then (again) contaminated by the fluctuations of the mind, it will quickly be destroyed as the pile of cotton is destroyed by fire.

कर्मचित्रोभविष्णुवश्चित्रश्वाभ्रमित चन्द्रित।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विनाशं वाधिक्षित॥ ४०॥

40. Deluded on the path to the Brahman, O Mighty-armed, without foundation and fallen from both paths, does he not perish like a scattered cloud?

एतसं संशयं कृष्ण चतुर्महिमपर्योपत।
त्वदन्तं संशयस्यास्तं न हुप्पयात॥ ४१॥
41. You should, O Kṛṣṇa, dispel my doubt in its totality. There is none else but you capable of dispelling it.

43. Having attained auspicious worlds and having lived there for three years of Viṣṇu, he who has fallen from yoga is born in the house of a pure and noble family.

Arjuna’s question is as follows: Is one who does not achieve perfection in yoga (because he is not fully established in the Brahmān) destroyed at the time when he is leaving this world? Or, is such a person destroyed as a result of difficulties that he is facing in reaching other worlds?

In the following verse, the Lord clearly answers Arjuna’s question:

44. Or he is reborn in a family of wise yogins endowed with wisdom, though such a birth in this world is even more difficult to attain.

A yogin who does not achieve perfection in yoga (in this life) is not destroyed either in this or another world because his faith (śraddhā) is not destroyed. Such a yogin has followed an auspicious path as ordained by the Lord, a path which does not bring transient fruits, like the performance of Vedic rituals.
45. There he regains that level of realization that he possessed in his previous body, and by virtue of this, O Joy of the Kurus, he keeps on practicing in order to attain yogic perfection.

पूर्वाध्यायः तेनेवं हिस्यते ह्यावशोयपि सन।
जिज्ञासुपि योगस्य शाब्दिकातिवर्त्तेन II 46 II

46. He is, even against his will, carried on by that former practice, and the mere desire to know yoga transcends the study of the Vedas.

अवश:—परतन्त्र एव किल तेन—पूर्वाध्यायः बलादेव योगाध्यायः प्रति
नीयते। न चैतत्त सामान्ये, योगाज्ञासामान्यनं शाब्दिकातिवर्त्ते,
मन्नस्वाध्यायातिद्वृत्ते च शाब्दिकात अतिवर्ते—न स्वीकृते II 46 II

The word avasah means dependent on something that is beyond one’s will. That which is stronger than the will of a yogin are the impressions accumulated by the previous practice of yoga. These impressions will forcefully, i.e., against his will, lead him to practice yoga again. This is not an ordinary state however, because such a yogin transcends Vedic studies by the mere desire to know yoga. He goes beyond this state because he does not treat Šabda Brahman, which is the study of the Vedas, as the highest reality.

प्रयोगाद्वितांतानस्तु योगी संज्ञारजिविनयः।
अनेकज्ञासंसिद्धस्तो याति परं गतिम् II 47 II

47. The yogin, continuously practicing with great effort, purified of all sins, perfected through many births, reaches the highest goal.

ततो—जिज्ञासानातमस्य यत्वरातु—अभ्यासक्रमेऽन्तरहते व्याधि सुधारति।
न चासी तेनैव देशेन सिद्ध इति मन्त्रायम्। अपितु बहुत जन्माति तेन
तद्भवत्समिति मन्त्रायम्। अति एव यस्यानात्मायोपायेऽवभावविद्यातिर्गितं स मोक्षार्थ इति
निक्ख्यायम् II 47 II

Chapter 6

48. A yogin is superior to the ascetic; he is considered superior even to the learned; a yogin is superior to the men of action. Therefore, be a yogin, O Arjuna.

तपस्विक्षायोधिको योगी ज्ञात्महोपि मतोधिकः।
कर्मभावात्त्वं योगी तस्माद् योगी भवार्ज्जुन। II 48 II

The superiority of the yogin over the tapasvin has already been explained 43. The yogin is superior to the learned (jñānicos) because the fruit of yoga is knowledge (jñāna). The yogin is superior to one who is engaged in performing acts because only the yogin knows how to perform acts.

In the next verse, the Lord points out that Hatha yoga, which does not develop faith in God, cannot grant yogic perfection.

चाच्च मित्यश्च कष्टवागमात्र संसिद्धिमित्यश्च।
विस्मित्छ धनां नेत्रमेव यो मां स्म मेव युक्ततमौ मतः II 49 II

43 See Abhinavagupta’s commentary on verses 61 and 62 of chapter 2.
49. And of all yogins, I hold him most fully united with me who worships Me with faith, his inmost being absorbed in Me.

Among all types of yogins, the best is the one who always keeps Me in his mind and heart and is always devoted to Me. Such a yogin, possessing faith and devotion, worships, i.e., meditates only on Me, having gained knowledge through the tradition of masters as a result of doing service to his respective teacher. Such a yogin is the best of all yogins (yuktatama) in the sense that he is united with Paramesvara. Therefore, we can conclude that knowledge of God is superior to all other types of knowledge.

**SUMMARY VERSE:**

Only by attaining God’s name everything is achieved, just as rice grains blossom when the rainy season comes.

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46 See commentary on verse 8 of chapter 6.
Therefore, the universe is non-dual in its essence because it evolves from Prakrti, which is originally one. From this we can conclude that even according to Sâmkhya philosophy, the non-dual nature of the universe can be proved. When Prakrti is joined with Puruśa and thus becomes individual self, it forms my higher nature. Prakrti evolves the manifold universe consisting of knowers and knowables. For that very reason, the ever-present Prakrti, which is the foundation of all living beings, reflects all the beings in the pure mirror of her own self.

The pronoun iyam refers to Prakrti, which exists on all levels of the universe and is clearly visible to all living beings. Although Prakrti (in its original form) is only one, it evolves into eight forms.

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47 In the Sâmkhya philosophical system, Prakrti is considered to be the material cause of the universe. Although the original form of Prakrti cannot be seen because of her subtlety, her existence is proved on the basis of the existence of her effects. Her effects or products, which inherently exist in Prakrti, are: intellect, the sense of I, mind, sense organs etc., as well as all the multitude of objects existing in the universe. See also Abhinavagupta’s commentary on verse 16 of chapter 2.

48 This refers to the theory of reflection (bimbapratibimbavâda), according to which creation is the reflection of the Śiva’s consciousness in the pure mirror of his own self. As an object reflected in the mirror does not differ from its original source, in the same way, the universe, does not differ from the consciousness that reflects it. The reflection is the result of svatantratâ of Śiva.

49 The difference between these two systems seemingly arises as Sâmkhya nowhere explicitly recognizes the existence of God (Īśvara) while Yoga does.
7. There is nothing existing that is higher than Me, O Winner of Wealth. All that exists is strung on Me as pearls on a string.

Like the thread which although not visible to the naked eye is present within, connecting all the pearls together, in a similar way God exists within the universe.

8. I am the taste in the waters, O son of Kunti; I am the light in the moon and the sun. I am the syllable Aum in all the Vedas; I am the sound in ether, and manhood in men.

In various types of waters, such as the ocean, a pond, and a lake, etc., I am not any particular taste like sweet, etc., but a generic taste, that is common to all the various types of waters. The same is with light. I am the light of the sun and the moon that is devoid of its qualities such as extreme heat and softness respectively. By the word sound (sabda), which exists in the ether (khe), all different varieties of sounds are expressed. This is because sound is a property that exclusively belongs to the ether. On the other hand, that sound (dhvani), which is not created by any cause such as, bringing two things together (samyoga) or by separating two things (viyoga), but which exists inherently in the cavity of the Brahmam and is called unstruck, (anahata) is the very nature of God. This unstruck sound, which is spoken of in all the sastras, could be heard and experienced by yogins who were fully concentrated on the highest reality. Paurusha is such kind of power through which one experiences that universal feeling, “I am (a man)” (paurusa).

9. I am the pure fragrance in the earth and the brightness in fire. I am the life in all beings and the austerity in ascetics.

Smell, which is the special property of the earth, is natural pure fragrance existing in the earth. However, a bad smell, excessive fragrance or any other variety of smell develops as the result of earth’s contact with other elements. As it is said:

When the element earth is dominant then fragrance comes as a result, when the fire element dominates then bad smell comes as a result, and when the water element excels then the smell is neither good nor bad.

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50 In contrast to created or audible sound, unstruck (anahata) sound is inaudible, uncreated, unmanifest and perpetual, existing on the level of nada. Nada is a first movement or stir of Siva and sakti that takes place at the very beginning of creation. In Tantraloka, Abhinavagupta defines unstruck sound in the following way: “The ever arising unstruck (anahata) sound is one phonem of the nature of nada, which cannot be separated from any other phonems because it never sets.”

(Chapter 7, verse 217)
10. Know Me, O Pārtha, to be the primordial seed of all beings. I am the intelligence of the intelligent; I am the splendor of the splendid.

I am the strength of the strong, devoid of desire and passion. I am the icchāśakti existing in all beings, which is not different from the various objects possessing a particular property and form, O Best of the Bharatas.

'Ícchāyāmātā yāvan jāte chintā nivedāyate.' (vi. śi., १८)

The primordial seed (bīja) is that which is subtle and is the root cause of all the beings. Power that is devoid of desire and passion (kāmarāga-vivarjita balam) is the force capable of maintaining all the beings in this universe. The word kāma in the fourth quarter of the verse stands for icchāśakti 51, which is of the nature of consciousness.

51 Icchāśakti is the power of Śiva which is intent on manifestation. On the level of icchāśakti, both jñāna and kriyāśakti remain united. Icchāśakti, which is identical with consciousness, is the will or desire arising in Śiva (as the result of the outward flow of bliss) to expand or create the universe. On the highest level (parād), where consciousness rests on herself, only icchāśakti is present. However, on the level of parāparā, icchāśakti is united with jñānaśakti. At that level, the nature of everything that will later come into existence is envisioned. At the level of aparā, the universe is projected outwardly by means of kriyāśakti. Therefore, in this process of creation the consciousness assumes different forms which, although appearing different from consciousness, always remain identical with her.

Śiva Upaniṣad is another name for Vijñānavairātīva.

52 Jñānaśakti is the power of knowledge of Śiva.
13. All beings are confused by these three states of existence constituted of guṇas; they do not recognize Me who is above them and imperishable.

Sattva and the other guṇas depend on me for their existence, but I do not depend on them. Therefore, through meditation on the Lord one experiences everything in terms of God. However, those still possessing the notion of duality cannot attain that state. The notion of duality possesses the power to attract the minds of all worldly people.

Having this very idea in mind it will be stated later that Vāsudeva is the entire universe (Vāsudevah sarvam iti). One who possesses this knowledge is blessed by the grace (śaktipāta 54) of Parāśakti 55. This grace of Parāśakti descends immediately after the neutralization of actions generated by the experiences of pleasure and pain in various past births. Such a person who possesses the firm realization that Vāsudeva is everything, attains the Lord. In this world, he is known as a great soul (mahātmā), a state very difficult to attain.

On the other hand, a person who is not aware of this reality, but is deluded by the guṇas doesn’t attain the state of Vāsudeva, which transcends the guṇas.

Next, the Lord will answer the question: Why people deluded by the guṇas cannot know the highest reality.

14. Divine indeed is this māyā of Mine, consisting of the guṇas and hard to overcome; only those who take refuge in Me go beyond it.

God (devah) is one who plays, i.e., engages in playful activity. Māyā is that playful activity which belongs to the Lord. In spite of sattva and the other guṇas being in fact non-different from the highest reality, which is pure consciousness, yet the notion of difference persists in people until that highest reality is cognized.

Possessing guṇas (gūnātīva) is a property of being the object of experience, which depends on the experiencer. This false notion of difference exists in the guṇas because their nature is not properly understood by worldly people, and therefore it appears as māyā to them. 56

Only such a person crosses māyā, who possesses guṇas such as sattva which is the source of the notion of difference, who knows the light of the highest Brahma and realizes the whole universe as non-different from that Brahma. On the other hand, those who do not transcend the guṇas do not cross māyā. As it is rightly said in verse 12, “They are in me but I am not in them.”

54 Śaktipāta is the falling of the grace of the Lord on an aspirant, who according to the intensity of this grace proceeds on the path of self-realization.

55 Parāśakti is the highest sakti belonging to Śiva.

56 The truth is in the eye of the beholder. For an unenlightened person the world appears as māyā because the notion of duality is present in his mind. On the other hand, for an enlightened person everything including māyā appears as Śiva.
15. The evil doers, who are foolish, lowest among human beings, whose knowledge is carried away by māyā and who partake of the nature of Asuras, do not seek refuge in Me.

Those who, although possessing a human body which enables them to attain the highest reality, disregard me (who am the highest reality), are sinful and the lowest of all human beings. Deluded (mūḍhath) are those who possess demonic (asūric) nature and are dominated by tāmas. This is the power of māyā.

Those who meditate on me are noble people and could be divided in four groups. Others on the other hand are mean-minded and are always on the move to obtain more property (in order to reduce their suffering) than those who are inferior to them. They do this in spite of the fact that the weak ones equally possess hands, feet, and body, i.e., are equally human beings. Nevertheless, these people are inferior to the enlightened person because the notion of difference still persists in them. Why is that so? For, they still think, “I will ask God to fulfill my desires.” Desires such as this reveal that the notion of difference is still dominant in them.

The enlightened person is fully established in God because he doesn’t think that he is different from the Lord and therefore, the Lord is not different from him. To such a person only God is dear and not the fruits of actions. These yogins have their hearts and minds perfected by the realization that Vāsudeva is everything.

19. At the end of many births, the man of knowledge resorts to Me realizing that Vāsudeva is all this universe. Such a great soul is difficult to find.

20. But those whose knowledge has been carried away by desires resort to other gods, observing various rites, constrained by their own material nature.
21. Whatever form any devotee wishes to worship with faith, I bestow on him unswerving faith in it.

22. He who endowed with faith seeks to propitiate that particular form, from that form he obtains his desires, the benefits being ordained by Me alone.

23. But temporary is the fruit gained by these men of limited minds. The worshippers of the gods go to the gods, but my devotees come to Me.

24. The unenlightened think of Me, the unmanifest, as being manifest, not knowing My higher being, which is imperishable and unsurpassed.

Those of little knowledge do not recognize My real nature, which doesn't have any concrete form. On the contrary, they know Me only in my concrete forms, which I take according to their desires. Therefore, there is no need to insist on giving me any particular name. The point here is that one who abandons his desires, and worships whichever form of God he chooses, then that given form of God eventually culminates in the real form of God, which is pure and formless. On the other hand, if the opposite is done then the outcome will be limited.

25. Concealed by My yogamāya, I am not visible to all. This confused world does not recognize Me, the unborn and the imperishable.
26. I know the beings that are past, that are present, O Arjuna, and those that are yet to come, but no one knows Me.

27. O Bhārata, all beings at the end of creation are confused as a result of the delusion caused by the pairs of opposites, which arise from desire and hate, O Conqueror of the Foe.

28. But those whose actions are pure, in whom sin has come to an end, liberated from the delusion of dualities, worship Me, steadfast in their vows.

29. Those who strive for release from old age and death, taking refuge in Me, they fully know the Brahman, the highest self (Adhyātman) and all about action.
Abhinavagupta identifies the term 'Brahman' and other forms such as 'Adhyātmika', 'Adhibhautika', 'Adhidiva' and 'Adhiyājñīka' as concepts that are commonly used in esoteric literature. They are all other forms in which the Supreme Being is represented. These forms are not just symbols or images; they are the ways in which the divine is perceived and understood by mortals. These understandings of the divine are not just mere words, as they are foundational to the spiritual practices and meditations through which one can achieve liberation.

If somebody would ask what is the purpose of worshipping God all your life, then it is better to remain silent than to answer this question. This is because this question is devoid of any meaning.

अथ अष्टमोऽध्यायः:

CHAPTER 8

Arjuna said:
1. What is Brahman? What is Adhyātmika? What is Adhibhautika? What is Adhidiva?

अधियज्ञः कथं कोणं देहसम्मुखः मधुसूदन।
प्रायणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोः स नियतालमभः।

2. Who is Adhiyājña, O Madhusudana? How does he exist in the body? How can you be known at the time of death by the self-controlled?

Other forms of the Lord, i.e., Adhyātmika, Adhibhautika, Adhidiva, Adhiyājña, briefly mentioned by the Lord in the previous chapter verses 29 and 30, will be explained in this chapter. However, these answers are preceded by nine questions raised by Arjuna.

57 It is difficult to see what could be the question number nine referred to by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on the second verse. I was able to identify only eight questions posed by Arjuna in the first two verses of this chapter. These questions are: (1) What is Brahman? (2) What is Adhyātmika? (3) What is action? (4) What is Adhibhautika? (5) What is Adhidiva? (6) Who is Adhiyājña? (7) How does he exist in the body? (8) How can you be known at the time of death, by the self-controlled? However, A. Sharma in his translation finds question number nine to be: How is it (adhiyājña) to be known? The problem with this interpretation is that in the following verses Lord Kṛṣṇa gives answers to only eight questions.

58 The meaning of these terms will be explained in the first two verses of the following chapter.
in its subtle form and then gradually becomes more visible, as it assumes more manifested forms. Then visarga gradually brings into existence a variety of knowers (prāmatra), from Brahmā to the multitude of beings both sentient and insentient. This multitude of beings constitutes the visible, manifested aspect of the universe. Then once again, in the reverse process, visarga dissolves this false universe and once again creates the real state of existence.

**Adhirūtā क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्रिधिद्वैवतम्।**
**अधियोजोऽहमेवत्र देहे देहभूतां वर॥ ४॥**

4. Adhibhūta constitutes perishable existence. Adhidaiavam is Puruṣa. I am Adhiyajña, abiding in this body, O Best of Embodied Beings.

The highest reality is called Brahmā because of being the largest, and because of being the creator of all other things (lit. tr., because of making other things grow or expand). The word svabhāva is the state of Being (bhāva) which never ceases (sva) and is expressed by the word consciousness. Therefore the word svabhāva means ‘continuous flow of consciousness’.

That Brahmā whose nature is the continuous flow of consciousness possesses within itself (lit. tr., holds in his lap) the power (śakti) capable of creating the entire universe because of her external unobstructed nature. Thus, the Brahmā, through its power of freedom (svatāntryaśakti 59) which is the characteristic mark of his glory, manifests a multitude of beings. The creative aspect of the process of manifestation is called visarga 60. This manifestation first takes place

59 Svatāntryaśakti is the power of absolute freedom belonging to Śiva.

60 Visarga śakti is the creative force or the power of emanation, which manifests herself as the universe. However, in the process of manifestation, although it experiences change, visarga remains unchanged and perfectly united with the highest consciousness. It is important to emphasize here that visarga is not only the creative force but the emanation as well. There are three stages of emanation projected outwardly by Śiva. The first stage is known as Sambava visarga. At this stage, the universe appears identical with consciousness. The differentiation among the knower, the object of knowledge and the process of knowledge is non-existent. This is the state in which non-relational, all-inclusive consciousness rests within herself. Second stage, which is known as Śākta visarga, is the stage where the first traces of duality appear. At this stage, although consciousness is aware of herself, yet the distinction among the knower, the object of knowledge and the process of knowledge is existent. However, this distinction exists only on the level of idea. The third stage of emanation is known as Anava visarga, in which duality dominates. On this level, the distinction among knower, object of knowledge and process of knowledge is fully developed.
*Purusottama* is the enjoyer of all sacrifices, because he is present in all sacrifices and has control over all of them. I am that *Purusottama* and I am the one who lives in the body. In this way, by one single effort the Lord answers two questions.

Next, the Lord will answer the remaining question, i.e., how can the Lord be remembered at the time of death.

\[ \text{अनन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्युक्तवा कलेवरम्।} \]

\[ \text{यः प्रयाति स मद्रावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशय:। II 5 II} \]

5. He who at the time of death, having given up his body, dies while remembering Me alone, he becomes identified with Me; of that there is no doubt.

\[ \text{यं यं वापि स्मर्थाभ्यं त्यज्यन्ते कलेवरम्।} \]

\[ \text{तं तमेवेति कौन्तेय सदा तद्नावभावित:। II 6 II} \]

6. Whatever state of existence he remembers at the time of giving up his body, that state he attains, O Son of Kunti, because of continuous meditation on that particular state.

\[ \text{तस्मात् सर्वेणु कालेशु मामनुस्मर युथं च।} \]

\[ \text{मद्यपित्यनमोबुद्धिमामेवायससंशयम्। II 7 II} \]

7. Therefore, at all times remember Me and fight. When your mind and intellect are absorbed in Me, to Me alone you will undoubtedly come.

\[ \text{न केवलं स्वस्वास्थमायवदनकालेशु, मामेवेति—व्यविच्छे-} \]

\[ \text{सकलपोषिभिषकम्। कथं चास्वास्त्वा विनिपुरसकालेशुचरं स्वत्वं} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{भगवन् स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]

\[ \text{ततस्तत: भाष्यनि ययों toughness में स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता} \]

\[ \text{स्मृतिस्थिपुर्यपैता—विद्वशुमस्वभोजं—चर्चाय्यकर्मचोरधेः} \]

\[ \text{कृतसूक्तर्व:—करोहर्डस्याते देहनिश्चर्माणि येव स्मरं तदेव} \]

\[ \text{स्मरति तदेव प्रथमप्रवृत्तिर्मोक्ति यादाने अंजकठिन:} \]
It is not only enough to remember God when one is in good health but also at the time of death. The Lord said, “Remember only Me”, who am free from all conditioning. In this verse, Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna the means of how one can remember him when one is not healthy and his sense organs stop operating properly.

This teaching is as follows: One, who under any circumstances always keeps God in his heart and mind, who surrenders all activity to God and whose mind is saturated by the thought of God, to such a person God himself spontaneously comes into memory. The means of accomplishing this is continuous meditation on God’s nature. Therefore, it is said that one whose mind is constantly engaged in meditation on any particular (desired) object, he at the time of death remembers, that is attains that desired object. This is to say that only such a person who has always taken the Lord to be the highest reality can hope to attain him at the time of death.

On the other hand, if one remembers God by accident at the time of death, then he will not attain the Lord. If that were the case, then even the realized yogin who has become unconscious because his mental operations are distracted by the defects of the three dhatus, would also attain a state similar to a person dominated by tamas throughout his life. This view is not correct because it goes against the authority of the sastras:

At the very time when a yogin attains liberation, he may shed his body off at any sacred place or at the house of an untouchable. In both cases he is free from suffering and attains liberation even if he loses his memory at that time.

\(\text{Paramàrthasàra, v. 83}\)

\(^{61}\) That is, if it were possible to attain God just by remembering him at the time of death.

\(^{62}\) According to Ayurveda, dhatus are three constituents of the body, i.e., vata, pitta and kapha. It is the position of Ayurveda that as long as these three remain in balance, one is said to be in good health.

Therefore, the sruti as well as its interpretation should be understood in the following way: After departure from this world one attains that state on which his mind was meditating throughout his lifetime. It is nowhere in any of the sastras insisted that one is to remember God at the time of death.

This idea is expressed through the particular usage of the particle 
\(\text{api}\) in verse number six. The usage of the particle \(\text{và}\), in verse six, makes it clear that there could be discontinuity in remembrance. Therefore, as I earlier said: “A person should treat God as the highest reality in all regards.” Sage Vyasa made a similar point when he said, “One should follow the Lord at all times.” Therefore, the correct wording of verse six should be as follows, “Whichever object one meditates on (throughout one’s life), that very object he attains whether he remembers God at the time of death or not.” The Lord can only be attained if one meditates on him throughout one’s life.

Other commentators however, interpreted this verse in the following way. That very moment of giving up one’s body — which cannot be perceived by others, such as relatives, which takes place immediately after actions such as heavy breathing, coughing and the hair standing on its end because of limbs losing their power — is devoid of experiences such as happiness, sorrow or delusion normally caused by the body. They point out that, whatever one remembers, at that very moment of giving up one’s body, that very thing becomes one’s nature in his next life. The cause of remembrance (of that desired object) is life-long continuous meditation on that particular object. These commentators take the word tvajati as the present participle in the locative case. It seems however, that both of these explanations (mine as well as the other commentators’) are the same in the final analysis.

If somebody asked the question: What is the purpose of remembering God at the time of death? The answer to this question is that there is no particular purpose for remembrance but it takes place spontaneously. Another question that could be asked here is: If at the time of death one remembers his son, wife, other relatives, or the cold water that he used to drink, does this mean that at the time of death he might attain identity with his wife, son or cold water? The answer to this question is certainly no. Because if one still remembers these things, then that would not be his last moment. If one can still remember his wife, and son etc., then he is certainly still very much in his body.
Now, at the time of death, whatever one was meditating on throughout his life, the impressions created by that meditation, however distant they might be, will be awakened and determine the future birth of that particular person.\(^{63}\) It is said in the \textit{Yogasūtras}:

There is an uninterrupted continuity of cause and effect, even though separated by life states space and time, because memory and the habitual potencies possess similar form. (\textit{Yogasūtra}, Chapter 4 sutra 9)

Because of the power of those past impressions, memory of that desired object takes place at the time of death and one attains identity with that desired object.

Now the question arises: What will happen with the person who doesn’t die from natural causes but as a result of accident even while still in good health?

The answer to this question is that he will also attain his desired object (the same memory of the desired object will be manifested). As it is described in the \textit{Purāṇas}, the king Bhārata, because of continuous thinking about a deer, was reborn as a deer in his next life. Therefore, the Lord said, “Remember only Me.”

Those who always meditate on God do that in order to become identical with the object of their meditation. To them:

Impressions born from that (meditation) counter the influence of other impressions. (\textit{Yogasūtra}, 1. 50)

According to this principle, in one who has been remembering God throughout his lifetime, the memory of God will take place at that very moment of giving up his body, which (moment) cannot be perceived by others. This memory will take place because of its being the strongest impression, which will neutralize other (less strong) impressions. Now, having remembered God, (at the very last moment) one drops one’s body and becomes united with \textit{Paramesvarā}, who is the highest reality and consciousness. This is because one becomes completely dissociated from the objective world, which is controlled by time. This is the view of Abhinava-gupta’s teachers.

\(^{63}\) The implied question here is: How could impressions gathered in a distant past determine one’s future birth?
12. All the gates of the body restrained, the mind confined within the heart, one's life force fixed in the head, established in concentration by yoga;

The word 'doors' (dvārāṇi) here means sense organs. The usage of the word 'in the heart' (hrdi) indicates non-attachment of the mind to the external objects. However, one's prāṇa should not be allowed to rest on the level of the anus. The vital air (prāṇa) of the ātman, which is its charioteer and which is of the nature of icchāsakti, should be placed on the top of the head (mūrdhṇi) which transcends all tattvas. This (placing the prāṇa on the top of the head) is called 'control of the body' (kāya niyamah).

13. He, who day by day moves closer to the place of no-return, uttering the single syllable Aum, remembering Me while giving up his body, he attains the highest goal.

14. For the yogin who constantly meditates on Me, whose mind is one-pointed and who is permanently established in yoga, I am easily attained.

64 See commentary on verse 27 of chapter 5.

65 See note 51.
losophy of non-dualism, where the Brahman is the highest and all-pervading reality. As it was said in the sāstras:

When the highest reality in the form of Śiva is omnipresent then what would be the meaning of ukrānti? If Śiva were not all pervading then again ukrānti would not be instrumental in granting the state of Śiva.

If however, those who are not throughout their lives involved in continuous meditation, somehow, for some reason, such as the free-will of God, would consider him at the time of death (and therefore, attain liberation), only then that sort of upāya could be called ukrānti. In such a case, (because of the free-will of God) that ukrānti would then be instrumental in blocking other saṁskāras from manifesting. Therefore, in verse 11, sage Vyāsa made the point that remembering God even for one moment is an extraordinary state of mind capable of destroying other saṁskāras. As the great acārya Bhāṭṭanārāyaṇa said:

O Lord, if you even for one moment make my mind free from the impurities of past impressions and make your abode there, then what will be impossible for you to achieve? (Stavacintāmāni, 114)

Therefore, for those who doubt that they will reach their goal if they don’t remember their desired object at the last moment, the Lord said, “I am easily attained by one whose mind is not attached elsewhere”, i.e., who has no other concerns or anything else to accomplish. Such a person doesn’t need to experience pain wandering around trying to find the appropriate place to die, such as sacred places, trying to die when the sun is in its northern course, taking shelter at the temples, attempting to increase sattva at the time of death, be always concentrated, trying to die at the auspicious day and month, trying to find a place that is naturally pure, attempt to keep his body clean and free from sweat or try to wear clean clothes.

Next, the Lord will clarify if he who reaches, i.e., knows the Lord, falls down from that experience.

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66 For a yogin who has realized the all-pervading nature of the highest reality, which is not different from his own self, any type of leaving of his body (ukrānti) is not helpful in any way. This is because when a yogin leaves his body, the ātman goes nowhere because it possesses an omnipresent nature, while his body dissolves back into the elements.

67 Leaving one’s body (ukrānti) is here described as a means (upāya) useful for a person who has not realized his own self.
15. Having attained Me, the great souls are not reborn in this world again, impermanent place of misery, for they have reached the highest perfection.

It was already pointed out that one unavoidably returns from other destinations such as heaven, etc. In the next verse, the Lord explains what happens with the person who attains God. He will make it clear that the yogin who attains the highest reality will never again experience fear in the form of birth, etc.

16. All worlds up to the realm of Brahman are subject to rebirth, but on reaching Me, O Son of Kunti, there is no return to birth again.

17. Those who know that the day and the night of Brahmā consists of a thousand ages, they are the knowers of day and night.

68 Other commentators including Śankara interpret the word Brahman, in the compound abrahamalokā to refer to Brahmā, the creator. In his commentary on this verse Śankara writes, “That in which beings appear is a world. Brahmā’s world is what pertains to him. Up to and including his world, all worlds have the feature of recurrence, O Arjuna! But on reaching Me, rebirth ceases” (translated by Dr. A. G. Krishna Warrier). Abhinavagupta on the other hand, takes the word Brahma, in the same compound, to refer to Brahman, the highest reality, beyond which there are no other worlds. If, however, the word Brahma would be taken to mean Brahmā, then the worlds above Brahmā would be the place where one attains liberation (mokṣa).
18. At the arrival of the Brahmā day, from the unmanifested all manifested things come into existence, and at the coming of night they dissolve into the same, known as unmanifested.

19. This very same multitude of beings arising again and again dissolve helplessly at the coming of night, O Pārtha, and they come back into existence at the coming of a new Brahmā day.

20. There is yet another state of existence, that transcends even the unmanifest, which does not perish even when all existences perish.

21. This unmanifested is called the imperishable. They call it the highest abode. That My highest abode, when attained, none returns from.

22. This is the highest Puruṣa, O Pārtha, in whom all beings abide and on whom everything is established, who is attainable by unwavering devotion. Yogins, O Arjuna, who attain him are free from birth and death.

Those who have far reaching insight know that Brahmā also experiences day and night in the form of creation and dissolution of the universe. Ordinary people (after) waking up begin their day by engaging in their respective activities. At night after they retire, their gross activity is transformed into subtle activity (activity existing in the form of potency in its subtle form).

The same is with the creation and the dissolution of the universe. Thus, at the time of a new creation Brahmā does not create a new set of beings but those old beings get awakened again and again. The difference between the life of Brahmā and that of ordinary human beings is only in their respective durations. This limitation is also applicable to the (eight) Prajāpatīs. They all experience birth and death.

In the next verse, the Lord will clarify that those who attain the highest reality never again return to this world.
This universe is established in Vāsudevatattva, which is imperishable and unchanging by nature. In regard to this highest reality what would be the purpose of expressions such as, ‘subject to rebirth’ (punardvrttih)? The very meaning of the word dvrti is indicative of separation from the highest reality. However, that which is eternal doesn’t need to move anywhere because it is already present everywhere. How would it be possible for one who has reached Paramesvara, who is eternal, beyond the universe and at the same time identical with this universe and in whom this universe is established, whose nature is freedom and consciousness, to be separated from that reality even for a moment? Therefore, it is rightly stated by the Lord, “Having attained me, the great souls are not reborn in this world again.”

In this way, the experience of those who have effortlessly attained the Lord through continuous practice has been described. Now a few words will be said about those who desire to attain mokṣa and enjoyment through various types of leaving one’s body (utkramit).

23. Now I will explain to you, O Best of Bharatas, the time in which yogins leaving their bodies never return and also the time in which they return.

The expression ‘not returning back’ (anavrti) here means mokṣa. The word returning back (avrti) indicates that one returns back to this world for the purpose of enjoyment (bhoga).

24. Fire, light, day, the bright half of the month, the six months of the northern course of the sun; if leaving his body then, the yogin who know the Brahman goes to the Brahman.

25. Smoke, night, the dark half of the moon, the six months of the southern path of the sun; if leaving his body then, the yogin reaches the light of the moon and returns again.

26. These two paths of light and darkness are held to be eternal for the world. By following the first of these two paths, the yogin goes not to return; by following the other path he returns again.
On the other hand, my respected teacher, for the purpose of obliging all, after making the statement on the various types of leaving the body (utkrami) which are caused by the function of internal time, concludes by pointing out that the main objects of knowledge are topics concerning external time.

Finally, having known this reality, suppresses all the impressions caused by the study of the Vedas, performance of sacrifices, austerities and charity, and attains the highest and primordial abode.

The word abhyeti here means ‘to suppress’. This is to say that by remembering God the yogin renders ineffective the impressions from all worldly activities. And when all impressions are destroyed then it is easy for a practitioner to attain Paramasiva.

**SUMMARY VERSE:**

When the Lord is known to be present in all the tattvas, then for a yogin there is no place either externally or internally where Parameśvara is not present.
अथ नवमोषध्यायः

CHAPTER 9

श्रीभगवानुवाच

इंद्रे तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्यायम्यनुसूक्ष्मे।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ञात्वा मोक्षसे पशुभात्॥ १ ॥

The Lord said:

1. I will reveal to you, who are free from disbelief, this profound secret of wisdom together with its practical aspect, by the understanding of which you will be released from inauspiciousness.

अनुसूक्ष्मं ज्ञानसंक्रायनं कारणं मुख्यम्। ज्ञानविज्ञाने—ग्राहात्॥ १ ॥

Non-existence of disbelief (anāsīyatvam) is the main factor for the transfer of knowledge. The meaning of the words of jījāna and vijñāna has already been explained ॥

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रत्मिदुतः।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्मे सुसुखं कर्मभव्यम्॥ २ ॥

2. This knowledge of the self is the shiny jewel among all other types of knowledge; it is preserved by kings, supreme purifier and easily understandable; it is in accord with dharma, imperishable and easy to practice.

राजोत्सविद्यायेऽत्यते या। इति अनुसूक्ष्मं ज्ञानम्। इति। राजा—जनकदीनाम्माधिकारस्तेऽपि रहस्यम्—अतिविज्ञानविभयं विद्याविशेषक्षम्मलतां। कर्मभव्यं—अनुसूक्ष्मं सुसुखम्। न च धर्मे ब्रह्मास्ति। ब्रह्माण्यमच्यन्ति न्योऽस्मि। "च ॥

॥ २ ॥

That knowledge which shines in the midst of all other types of knowledge is called rājavidyā. In this very text, rājavidyā will be described as adhyātmavidyā. This rājavidyā is the entitlement of kings, such as Janaka, etc., because this knowledge is extremely profound and therefore it is kept as secret by the kṣatriya class, who by nature possess valor. The word kartum indicates that this rājavidyā is easy (susukham) to practice. Unlike other worldly activities, which bring only temporary results, the meditation on the Brahman (brahmaupāsana) brings about permanent results, i.e., the experience of the highest reality.

अश्रवह्याना: पुरुषाः धर्मसाध्यान्तवतः॥
अप्राणाः मां निवर्तने मृतृसंसारवत्त्विना॥ ३ ॥

3. Men who have no faith in this knowledge, O Oppressor of the Foe, not realizing Me return to the world of mortals.

निवर्तने—पुनःपुनजाग्यने भिपयते च॥ ३ ॥

The expression ‘they return’ (nivartante) indicates the cycle of death and rebirth.

मवं तत्ततमेऽण्यं अगद्वक्कृतिना।
मस्यानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेषवस्थितं॥ ४ ॥

4. The entire universe is pervaded by Me through My unmanifest form. All beings abide in Me, but I do not abide in them.

मस्यानि सर्वभूतान्मित्वस्मिनन्तने गत्वा अन्तर्यम् प्रतिष्ठानमोऽविद्यामलः। भूतविचिन्तमक्षणित्वं ध्रुवपरीयुक्तस्मित्वं तद्भवाये न पीवं विद्विशेषक्षात्मतिरंभानम। इत्येवदाह—'न चाहं तेषवस्थितं।"—इति॥ ४ ॥

Even if one has to be separated from the Lord for a long time he would not find any other abode different from the Lord. This is because there is nowhere, not even one spot that exists outside of the Lord.

॥ ५ ॥

See commentary on verse 46, chapter 3, and commentary on verse 8, ch. 6.

॥ ५ ॥

See verse 32, chapter 10.
If, however, the illumination of consciousness was dependent on insentient objects, which are well known to be knowables, i.e., made out of elements, then the nature of consciousness, which is opposite to unconsciousness, would be concealed. This is the reason why the Lord said, “I do not abide in them.”

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पशु में योगमेश्वरम्।
भूतभृत्र च भूतस्थू समामय भूतभावनः॥ ५॥

5. And the beings do not dwell in Me; behold My divine mystery. My spirit, the source of all beings, sustains the beings but does not abide in them.

‘Living beings do not dwell in me’ (na ca matsthāni) as they cannot perceive the reality because of being blinded by ignorance. Foolish people do not recognize Paramēśvara, whose nature is consciousness and who is the highest abode of all limited things. On the contrary, deluded people think, “I am a weak person called Devadatta, I know this thing, I know that this or that thing is placed on the ground.” By thinking in this way, they show that what they consider to be the highest abode is (an abode) of limited nature. How is this contradiction between the common experience and reality possible?

To explain this the Lord said, “Behold the extraordinary nature of my yoga.” The word yoga here means power (sākṣī) capable of bringing about the union of human beings and the divine. The word glory (āśvarya 73) is the freedom of operation (action) of the highest Lord, which is par excellence and amazing.

6. As the mighty air, which pervades everything, ever abides in the ākāśa, know that in the same manner all beings abide in Me.

एवं हि सर्वभावेवु चराम्यनिविलक्षिनः।
भूतप्रकृतिमात्राय सहेव च विनेव च॥ ७॥

7. Having taken recourse to material nature (Prakṛti), I exist unnoticed among all living beings, remaining, at the same time, in the universe and above it.

यददाकाशायोरविनाभाविनियमाय संबन्धे न जातुचिंतनं समस्यतः हृदये, एवं
सकलसंसाराक्षितियमेव भगवदः तव न सर्वजनविषयम्॥ ७॥

In spite of close invariable concomitance between ākāśa and air, ākāśa is never (in reality) touched by air. In the same way, brahmatattva in spite of being omnipresent remains unknown to most of the people.

8. All beings, O Son of Kunti, at the end of one cycle pass into Prakṛti, which is My own; and once again, at the beginning of the next cycle, I create them forth.

प्रकृतिं—अव्यक्तरूपम्॥ ८॥

The word ‘Prakṛti’ here refers to the ‘unmanifested’ (Avyaktam).

प्रकृतिं स्वामवश्यं विसूजायिनः पुनः।
भूलाग्राममिमं कृत्स्मवशं प्रकृतेवेवशात्॥ ९॥

73 Aśvarya or sovereignty is yet another name for the svātantrya sākṣī of the Lord.
9. Having taken recourse to My own Prakṛti, I create again and again; the entire multitudes of beings are powerless because they are under the control of Prakṛti.

By the statement, “Having taken recourse to My own Prakṛti” it is pointed out that worldly objects, in spite of being unconscious by nature, become illuminated by the light of consciousness, which belongs to the highest reality.

10. All these actions do not bind Me, O Winner of Wealth, for I remain as it were indifferent and unattached to these actions.

11. Under My guidance, Prakṛti produces all these moving and unmoving beings, and through this, O Son of Kuntī, the world revolves.

I am not bound by action because I am indifferent towards the results of actions. I am the cause of the universe and therefore, the act of creation is not dependent on anything outside of Me.

12. The deluded despise Me clad in human body, not knowing My higher nature, which is unsurpassed and imperishable.

Although I live in the hearts of all living beings, nevertheless ignorant people disregard Me because they see themselves as distinct from the ātman. They ask: How could there be a God in this world, because there is nothing (to be seen) as existing separate from the fourteen-fold worlds, such as the world of humans, etc.?

13. All their hopes, actions and knowledge are futile and they are thoughtless creatures, for they partake of the deluding nature of Rakṣasas and Asuras.

Action, knowledge and desires of deluded people are all rendered fruitless because their actions, and knowledge, etc., are directed towards that which is not real. Their nature is either that of Asuras or Rakṣasas, i.e., they are dominated either by rajas or tamas guṇas.

14. But great souls, O Pārtha, who partake of divine nature, knowing Me as the imperishable origin of all beings, worship Me with concentrated mind.
15. Continually glorifying Me, strenuous and determined, paying homage to Me with devotion and permanently established in yoga, they meditate on Me.

ज्ञानायें चाष्यपै यज्ञात यातुमपालस।
एकवें पृथोक्तेन बहुधावि विश्वामिरुम।।१६।।

16. Others worship Me, who is present everywhere, through sacrifice of knowledge with one pointed meditation; yet others worship Me through various external sacrifices.

देवीं—सार्वज्ञानीयः। यज्ञात—बाह्यमंत्रदायिगै।। अन्ये है मां
ज्ञानायेंवैवोपालस।। अतं—कैचिदुः एकत्यसं—ज्ञात।। कैचिदृ बहुधाभिस्मोक्तेन।।
मत्वा एव सर्वेऽऽ०।।१६।।

नन्दु कर्मं तत्वकारकालप्रयासभेदोपकर्तिकं कथमभिन्नं भववर्त्यं प्राप्तितिति?
उच्चाते—

The word *daivim* is that nature descriptive of the gods where *sattva* dominates. The word *yajantaḥ* refers to those who worship the Lord using various materials needed for performance of external sacrifices. Others worship the Lord with the sacrifice of knowledge, which here means internal sacrifice. Therefore, some worship the Lord with a one-pointed mind, i.e., knowledge, while others worship the Lord with various external sacrifices. However, both paths lead to the realization of the highest reality.

Now, the question arises, how is it possible that sacrifice or any other activity, which unavoidably involves various instruments and which is dominated by duality, can bring about realization of the Lord who is oneness?

अहं क्रतुः यज्: स्वधात्ममहोक्षधम्।
मयोःश्रमहमेवाच्यमहामिरातं।।१७।।

17. I am the ritual action, I am the sacrifice, I am the ancestral offering, I am the herb, I am the mantra, I am also the clarified butter, I am the fire and I am the oblation.

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धातापितामहः।
वेदं पवित्रमोहार ऋक्षाय यजुर्वेच च।।१८।।

18. I am the father of this world, the mother, the supporter and the grandfather. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier. I am the sacred syllable *Aum* and I am the *rk*, the *sāma* and the *yajus* as well.

गतिभर्तेऽप्रभु: साध्यी मित्राः: शरणं सुहऽि।
प्रभव: प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं ब्रजमहत्यायः।।२०।।

19. I am the goal, the upholder, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge and the friend. I am the origin and the dissolution, the existence, the treasury and the imperishable seed.

तपायमहां वर्ष निगुहायरुज्यात्मि च।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युः सदसचाहमर्जूः।।२०।।

20. I cause heat, I withhold and send forth the rain, I am immortality and also death, and I am being as well, O Arjuna.

एकस्यैव निभायमयः ब्रह्मात्मस्य परिकल्पतसाध्यानीयं कर्मवेणरक्षम
निवर्त्यतिति—क्रियायः: सर्वकारकालप्रयासकारणाय स्वभावविप्रासि
प्रत्येकदृष्टिः। उच्चात्—

'सेवं क्रियाकलापां शक्ति: शिवस्य दुर्गायतीन।
बन्धुचित्रे, स्वभान्मवथः जगता सिद्धुपपादिक।'
(स्य., ३ नि., १६ रलौ।)

हेति। मयायुः—

'उपक्रमे चैव ्बुद्धिभवाभवानवाचिनी।
उपसंहारितकाले सा भावाभावानुतितिः'
(हेति, त्रें त्रस विवशतं विचारितयाचरभेदं इति।) तपायमहित्यादि—
अतेतकस्याप्रस्थेत्वा नित्यं।।२०।।
The ritual action (karman), which is entirely dependent on external means, is under the control of the Brahman, which is one and undivided. This is the reason why ritual activity eventually returns back to the state of unity with the highest reality. It is possible that sacrifice or any other activity leads to the realization of the highest reality, when that activity is dedicated to that highest reality, which is in essence identical with the external means. As it is said:

That creative power of Śiva existing in the bound soul is instrumental in binding; that same power, when her true function is realized, brings about attainment of perfection.

(Spanda Kārīka, chapter 3, kārīka 16)

I also said:

The intellect, which in the beginning perceives the entire universe as being created and destroyed, i.e., different from Śiva, that very intellect (after reaching mokṣa) realizes that this universe is not different from Śiva.

Here I will stop elaborating this point because it has already been discussed at various places in other works.

Although not directly the answer to the question 74, expressions such as, “I cause heat, etc.” are used by the Lord because they shed some light on the topic under discussion, i.e. non-dualism.

Now, the question arises: If the Brahman could be attained by performance of external rituals then could sacrifice (yāga), etc., also please other gods as well? If accepted, this view would give support to the philosophy of dualism. If āsūdevatattva is the ultimate goal of all sacrifices, then how is it possible that those who perform rituals to other gods do not attain mokṣa? 75

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74 The question was raised in verse 16. The question is: How is it possible that sacrifice, or any other activity which is dominated by duality, can bring about realization of the Lord who is oneness?

75 It is nowhere mentioned in the Vedas that one can attain mokṣa by performing any particular sacrifice.
23. To those who worship Me, meditating on Me alone, to them who are permanently established in yoga, I bring attainment of the highest reality and the security that they cannot fall down from that state.

How do others (who do not have limited results in their minds) think about the Lord? They, only by desiring the highest reality, attain the results in the form of the highest reality.

In this context, the word yoga means attainment of the nature of the Brahman, which did not exist before. While the word kṣema means the protection of that attainment. This protection is a guarantee that one is established in the Brahman and there is no possibility of falling down from that state.

24. Even those who are devotees of other gods and sacrifice to them with faith, they also sacrifice to Me alone, O Son of Kuntī, although they use different methods.

25. I am the enjoyer and the Lord of all the sacrifices. But those of limited mind do not recognize Me in my true nature and so they fall.

26. To gods go their devotees and to ancestors their devotees, those devoted to ghosts go to ghosts, but my devotees come to Me.

27. Whosoever offers to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I accept that offering of devotion from such a pious devotee.
Those who, in the process of worship, use different names or forms, they also worship the highest Lord. This is because everything that exists that could be worshipped is included in that Brahman. However, the difference between these two types of worship (between worship of the highest Brahman and of other gods possessing different names and forms) is that those who worship by using different names, etc., worship according to the different injunctions (avidhi). The word avidhi simply means different types of injunctions. Therefore the Lord said that he, who is of the nature of the highest Brahman, could be worshipped through various kinds of injunctions.

However, some other commentators have explained the word avidhi to mean ‘wrong or impure injunction’. These commentators are polluted by the great sin abundantly incurred of criticizing other philosophical systems. If their commentators were accepted as correct then statements by the Lord, such as, “They all sacrifice to Me” or “I am the enjoyer of all the sacrifices” could not be justified. Just pointing out the difference (between my commentary and the commentary of others) is sufficient, as one should not get involved in discussion with those who are polluted by this great sin.

My teacher explains this particular point in the following way: Even those kinds of people — who under the influence of a dualistic philosophy worship other gods and treat them as different from their own self and as different from the nature of the Brahman — worship only the highest Brahman, who is identical with their own atman. However, these kinds of people follow wrong injunctions (duṣṭa avidhi) because their worship includes within itself the notion of duality. Therefore, the Lord said, “They do not know Me who is their own self, who is the real enjoyer of sacrifices and who has taken the form of that particular god (that they worship). Therefore, such people deviate from my path.” In this context, the word deviate means that they go to other gods because they are devoted to them. Those who, on the other hand, know the Lord as undivided reality worship only him even when they sacrifice to other gods or to their ancestors. Thus, we can conclude that all those who worship the highest Brahman, attain that Brahman.

The gods (devata) are usually defined as those to whom one offers various objects for the purpose of pleasing them. If this definition is accepted, then how is it possible that the highest reality (which is not an object of sacrifice) becomes a god, i.e. that to which sacrifice is offered? For example, in the injunction, “Boiled rice should be offered to the Sun God”, we would need another injunction (because in this injunction the highest reality is not mentioned). However, another injunction should be made only if other gods (to whom we intend to sacrifice) are left out after the injunction is made. The answer to this question is that the injunction for sacrificing to one’s own atman cannot be made. Therefore, it is said that they worship me with injunctions, which are not according to tradition (avidhi pañcaka).

An injunction is required only in case that God is different from atman. This is because, the purpose of an injunction is to bring about something that did not exist before. However, there is no need for any injunction regarding Parameswara, who is one’s own atman because that Parameswara cannot be attained, as he is present always and everywhere. There is no ritual (or any other act) that in its final analysis does not aim at the atman.

Therefore, in all acts of sacrifice, which are prescribed by various injunctions aiming to please Indra, etc., that God — who is the self (atman) of one’s own, whose essence is the creation of the universe, who continuously manifests himself as the multitude of gods and who connects all this universe like the thread in a garland of
flowers — is (in reality) the object of all sacrifices. This is because he is behind the manifestation of all the gods such as Indra, etc. Therefore, the fact that the Lord is the aim of all sacrifices stands logically justified.

Those who initiate the performance of sacrifices (yajamāna) do not intend to attain the main goal of sacrifice, which is ātman. Their aim is to reach the abode of Indra, etc. This they accomplish by giving an appropriate daksīṇā to the priest (vājaka) who performs the sacrifice. Therefore, the initiator of the sacrifice, just like the priest, is satisfied with limited results. To make this point clear, sage Vāsā used the root yaj, in verse 24 in parasmaipada. As I said:

Some people know the Vedas but do not know the realm of Śiva, (then) they become detached but experience sorrow. In order to attain heaven they forsake the path of the yajamāna and themselves become performers of sacrifices (vājaka). All the streams of flow of sacrifices are nothing but the flow of consciousness. However, without being perfectly established in the fullness of consciousness, they do not succeed in becoming unified with that ocean of bliss.

Therefore, for those who understand the philosophy presented above, even a sacrifice aiming to please Indra, etc., becomes a sacrifice aiming at Parameśvara. Although that particular sacrifice, such as the one to Indra, etc., might be different in nature (from that aiming directly at Parameśvara), yet it assumes the characteristics of the act of worship of Parameśvara. This is because every action (in its final analysis) aims at Parameśvara.

यत्कारोष यदशार्शि यजुःपखि ददासि यतः।
यजप्यस्यती कौन्तेय तत्कृतियव मद्यपंम्। २८ ॥

28. Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer, whatever you give as charity, whatever austerities you practice, O Son of Kuntī, do them as an offering to Me.

शुभाशुभफलेवं मोक्षयें कर्मवर्धने।
सत्यायोगायुक्तं वियुक्तं मायूपेश्च। ॥ २९ ॥

29. By doing this you will be freed from the bonds of action together with its auspicious and inauspicious fruits. With your mind firmly established on the path of renunciation, you will become free and attain Me.

Those who sacrifice to the Lord with limited desires minimize the result of their sacrifices. Therefore, you should follow my instruction and dedicate all your desires and actions to Me. This is called sannyāsa yoga, which was clearly and at length described in previous chapters.

समोश्च सर्वभूतेऽन्मेव हेमयोजिते न प्रियः।
ये भजनिः तु मां भक्तया मायेः तेत्रु चावायहम्। ॥ ३० ॥

30. I am the same in all beings. None I hate nor particularly like. But those who worship Me with devotion, they stand in Me and I also in them.

अपि गीतं सुदुःस्चातो भजते मायमन्यभावः।
साधुवेव स प्रज्ञा: सम्यक्ययवसि हि सः। ॥ ३१ ॥

31. Even if an exceedingly wicked man worships Me with undistracted devotion, he must be considered as a good man, for he possesses discrimination.

खित्रं भवति धार्मिकं श्राध्वचन्ति निगच्छति।
कौन्तेय ग्योतिजक्षीर्मिन्नं मद्यतः: प्रणात्यतः। ॥ ३२ ॥

According to Pāṇini, the root yaj is used in both ātmanaipada and parasmaipada. Parasmaipada is used when the action is performed for the sake of somebody else. Here the expression ‘limited desires’ means that one treats gods to whom he sacrifices as being different from Parameśvara.
32. Quickly he becomes the embodiment of righteousness and attains eternal peace; I give you my word, O Son of Kunti, that My devotees never perish.

"I give you my word" (pratijāne). The idea expressed by the Lord, i.e., that his devotees never perish, which was first logically proved by reasoning, is now made even stronger by the promise of the Lord of the universe.

33. Those who take refuge in Me, O Pārtha, even if of low origin, women, vaiśyas, or śūdras, they also attain the highest goal.

34. How much more then, brāhmaṇas rich in merit and devoted royal sages; (therefore), having entered this impermanent and unhappy world, devote yourself to my service.

35. Merge your mind with Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, pay homage to Me; thus established in yoga with Me as your highest goal, you will come to Me.

The word pāpayonayah refers to beings of low origin (birth). These beings are animals, birds, and reptiles, etc. Women 78 are included among the creatures of low origin because of not being properly educated. Vaiśyas are included because they are always engaged in activities such as agriculture, etc. Śūdras are mentioned because they are not entitled to take part in any of the Vedic rituals and because of the fact that they are dependent on others for earning their living. However, it should be known that even if these creatures take refuge in the Lord, they also attain the highest abode. In thousands of Purānic stories we find examples where the extremely compassionate Lord grants liberation to creatures of low origin. One of these stories is the story entitled "Liberation of the elephant Gajendra". Now, if creatures of low birth attain liberation, then what to say about learned brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas.

Some other commentators, however, explain that by verse 33 the Lord Kṛṣṇa did not intend to say that women, etc., could attain liberation, but rather his intention was to praise the brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya castes. These commentators are rejecting the all merciful nature of God because of their limited knowledge. They do not realize that Paramēśvara is the great and all merciful Lord. In this way they contradict the Lord's words such as, "None I hate nor particu-

78 The word 'women' (striyāḥ) could also be taken to refer to both men and women who are not educated.
larly like”, as well as other similar statements expressing clearly the same idea. By doing this they are forcefully bringing the notion of duality into the highest reality. This in spite of the fact that the non-dual nature of the highest reality has been abundantly proved with non-refutable arguments. They are also not aware that their way of thinking is contradictory to other āgamas as well.

However, when asked: How can you say something like this? These people, whose minds are influenced by the evil of caste, etc., which is deeply engrained in their innermost beings, make grimaces by lowering their eyes and faces because of greed, dissimulation and shame, and talking nonsense in front of all people become the objects of ridicule to all. Therefore, only the explanation that was previously offered by me renders auspiciousness to all.

अथ संग्रहस्यतः:

अन्धे ब्रह्मण परा सर्वानुप्रहर्षिताम्।
शक्तिकिनवृत्तेति, तेन यततर्यं तदासये॥ ९ ॥

SUMMARY VERSE:
That all merciful Parāśakti, which blesses all living beings, blossoms and expands in that unitary consciousness called Brahma; therefore, one should strive to attain that highest reality.

इति श्रीमहामहेश्वराचार्यवर्गराजानकभित्वमुक्तिपदितिविचारीते
श्रीमद्गर्भद्वद्वितार्थसंग्रहमन्वयोध्यायः॥ ९ ॥

The philosophy which was discussed in the preceding nine chapters will be summarized and further elaborated in this chapter. Therefore, the Lord opens this chapter with the words, “Listen, O Mighty-armed, one more time”. The purpose of the repetition of already explained ideas is to make things even more clear. Later in this chapter, in verse 18 Arjuna will also express the same need when he will say, “explain to me again.”

The remaining portion of the chapter needs no commentary, as I would be just repeating what I have already said. However, if the need arises I will clarify ideas or words that could be confusing.

श्रीभगवानुपातः

भूय एव महाबाहो श्रुणु मे परम वचः।
यतेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकायाय॥ १ ॥

The Lord said:
1. Listen, O Mighty-armed, one more time to My supreme word, which desiring your good I will speak to you, now that you are taking delight in it.

न मे विदुः सुर्गणा: प्रभवं न महर्षयः।
अहमादिहि देवान्म महर्षिणां च सर्वश:॥ २ ॥

2. Neither the hosts of gods nor the great Rṣis know any origin of Me, for in all respects I am the source of the gods and the great Rṣis in every way.
3. He who knows Me, the unborn, beginningless, and as the great Lord of the universe, such a person among mortals is undiluted and freed from all sins.

4. Discriminative power, knowledge, enthusiasm for practice, patience, truth, control of the senses and calmness; pleasure and pain, existence and non-existence, fear and fearlessness,

5. Non-violence, balanced mind, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and ill fame are the different states of beings, which proceed from Me alone.

6. The seven great Rsis of old and the four Manus are also of My nature and born of My mind, and from them all these creatures sprang.

7. He who knows in truth this glory and power of Mine is united with Me through unfaltering yoga; of this there is no doubt.

8. I am the origin of all and from Me all proceeds. Knowing this, the wise worship Me, endowed with firm resolve.

9. Their thoughts in Me, their lives given up to Me, enlightening each other and ever conversing of Me, they find contentment and rejoice in Me.

Devotees are enriching the knowledge of each other and thus enlightening each other by mutually discussing and explaining to each other the nature of that highest reality. As a result of the unifying and all-pervading power of the Lord (fully expanded concomitance), these kinds of devotees become united with one single Lord. And when the unifying power has been fully expanded, the devotees become sharers of the glory of the Lord because they realize that the atman is all pervasive and omnipresent.

10. To these who are uninterruptedly united with Me and who worship Me with love, I grant the yoga of knowledge by which they come to Me.
11. Moved by compassion for them, I remain within their own beings and destroy the darkness born of ignorance through the shining lamp of knowledge.

Arjuna said:

12. You are the supreme Brahman, the supreme abode and the supreme purifier, the eternal divine Purusa, the first of the gods, the unborn, the all-pervading.

13. All the sages say this of you, as well as the divine seer Nara, so also Asita, Devala, Vyas, and now you yourself tell me so.

14. All this that you say to me I take to be true, O Keśava; neither the gods nor the demons, O Lord, know your manifestation.

15. Undoubtedly, O Highest Purusa, you know yourself through yourself alone, O God of gods, source of all beings, Lord of creatures, Lord of the world!

16. You should tell me of your divine and pure powers, without exception, by which you pervade these worlds, and in which you abide.

17. Always meditating on you, O Great Yogi, how may I know you? In what various aspects of being, O Blessed Lord, are you to be meditated on by me?

18. Explain to me again in detail, O Janārtana, your yoga and your powers, as I am never satisfied with hearing your nectar-like speech.

The Lord said:

19. Yes, I will enumerate to you My pure divine forms, but only those which are prominent, O Best of Kurus, for there is no end to My expansion.

20. I, O Guḍākesha, am the atman seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the very end of beings.
21. Of the Ādityas I am Viṣṇu, of lights the radiant sun; I am Marici of the Maruts; of all the stars I am the Moon.

22. Of the Vedas I am the Sāmaveda, of the gods I am Indra; of senses I am the mind, I am the consciousness in all beings.

23. Of the Rudras I am Śaṅkara; of the Yaksas and the Rakṣasas I am Kubera; of the Vasus I am Agni and of mountain peaks I am Meru.

24. Of the household priests, O Pārtha, know me to be Bhṛgaspati; of the commanders of the armies I am Skanda; of the lakes I am the ocean.

25. Of the great Rṣis I am Bhṛgu; of utterances, I am the single syllable Aum; of sacrifices I am the silent repetition of mantra, and of unmovable things I am the Himalayas.

26. Of all trees I am the aśvattha and of divine Rṣis Nārada; among the Gandharvas Citraratha and of the perfected ones Kapila the sage.

27. Of horses know me to be Uccaiḥśravaḥ born from nectar; of princely elephants Airāvata, and of men I am the king.

28. Of weapons I am the thunderbolt; of cows I am the wish-fulfilling cow; of progenitors I am Kandarpa; of serpents I am Vāsuki.

29. Of Nāgas I am Ananta; of water creatures I am Varuṇa; of the ancestors I am Aryaman; of those who maintain law and order I am Yama.
31. Of purifiers I am the wind; of warriors I am Ráma; of fishes I am the alligator and of rivers I am the Gángá.

32. Of creations I am the beginning, the end and also the middle, O Arjuna; of knowledge I am the knowledge of the self; of those who debate I am the logic.

33. Of letters I am the letter ȳ and of compounds I am the dvandva; I alone am imperishable time, and I am the creator whose face is turned in all directions.

34. I am all-devouring death and the origin of things that are yet to be, and of feminine qualities I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, wisdom, firmness and patience.

35. Likewise, of hymns I am Brhatsáman; of meters gáyatri; of months margaśírṣa and of seasons the spring.

36. Of the dishonest I am gambling; of the vigorous I am vigor; I am victory and resolution, and the purity of the pure.

37. Of the Vṛṣṇis I am Vásudeva; of the Pándavas the winner of wealth (Arjuna); of the sages I am Vyása and among the poets Usánas.

38. Of those that punish I am the rod; of those that seek victory I am the wise policy; of things secret I am the silence, and of those who possess knowledge I am knowledge itself.

39. And further, whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that I am, O Arjuna; nor is there anything moving or unmoving that can exist without existing through Me.

40. There is no end to My divine manifestations, O Conqueror of the Foe. What has been declared by Me is only illustrative of My infinite power.

41. WHATSOEVER BEING THERE IS, ENDOwed WITH GLORY AND VIGOR, KNOW THAT TO HAVE SPRUNG FROM A FRAGMENT OF My splendor.
42. But what could be the purpose, O Arjuna, for such detailed knowledge to you? I support this entire universe pervading it with a single fraction of myself.

non-dualism (*abheda vāda* 79). The Lord expresses this idea in the very last verse of this chapter.

It is said in the Vedas, “All beings are just one quarter of the *Brahman*, but three quarters of immortal worlds are placed in heaven, i.e., infinite light.” This entire universe is of the nature of the Lord, who is the cause of the creation of all living beings. And that Lord, in his various forms becomes the object of the experience of all created beings.

**SUMMARY VERSE:**

Whatever might be the object of one’s experience and whatever might form the content of one’s desire, one should while persistently dissolving all of that, meditate on the *Brahman*, which is the highest peace.

79 The ultimate reality has three aspects: non-difference (*abheda*), difference-cum-non-difference (*bhođabheda*) and difference (*bhedā*). The *abheda* aspect of the highest reality is *Brahman* or Śiva, where no duality in any form could be present. The *bhođabheda* aspect of the highest reality comes into existence as a result of the process of manifestation of that *Brahman*. Although, on this level, there are traces of duality and multiplicity, non-duality is still dominant. The *bhedā* aspect of the highest reality is the fully manifested world where duality dominates.
Chapter 11

In this chapter, Arjuna will express the desire to directly experience the philosophy taught to him by the Lord in the preceding ten chapters. The philosophy that one studies and learns through instruction (from a teacher) becomes clearer through direct experience. For this very reason this chapter is presented in the form of questions and answers.

1. As a blessing to me you have given out this supreme mystery, the discourse concerning the highest self; through that my delusion has completely disappeared.

2. I have heard from you about the creation and dissolution of beings in great detail, O Lotus-eyed, and also about your imperishable majesty.

3. O Highest Puruṣa, I desire to see that glorious form of yours that you have described yourself to be.

4. O Lord, if you consider me capable of perceiving that divine form of yours, then reveal to me your imperishable self, O Lord of Yoga.

The Lord said:

5. Behold My forms, O Pārtha, a hundred-fold, a thousand-fold, various in kind, divine, variously colored and shaped.

6. Behold the Adityas, the Vasūs, the Rudras, the two Aśvins and also the Maruts. Behold, O Pāndava, many wonderful beings never seen before.

7. Behold, O Guḍākeśa, here and now, the whole universe, moving and unmoving, and whatever else you might want to see; that all exists in My body.

8. But you are unable to perceive Me with your ordinary eyes; I give to you the divine eye. Behold My divine form.
14. Then Arjuna, the Winner of Wealth, filled with amazement, his hair standing on end, said to the Lord with bowed head and folded hands:

**Arjuna said:**

15. O God, I see assembled all the gods and various beings in your body, Lord Brahmā, seated on a lotus seat, and all the dazzling Rṣis and heavenly serpents.

16. I see you having many arms, bellies, faces and eyes, on all sides and infinite in form; I do not see your end, your middle or your beginning, O Lord of the Universe, whose form is the universe.

17. I see you, who are hard to see, wearing crown, mace and discus, shining on all sides as a mass of light.
blazing everywhere with the immeasurable radiance of the flaming sun and fire.

\[ \text{त्वमश्रं परं चेदितयं} \\
\text{त्वमश्रं विश्रस्य परं निधानम्} \\
\text{त्वमश्रं: सात्रं तथर्मगोसा} \\
\text{सनातनस्य चुक्तो मतो मे} \]

18. You are the imperishable, the supreme to be realized. You are the ultimate resting place of the universe; you are the eternal protector of the dharma of the enlightened ones; I consider you to be the primeval being.

\[ \text{सात्रं तथा क्रियाज्ञोप्रभोरे} \\
\text{सत्तमस्य प्रकाशश्च} \\
\text{तत्त्वं सत्तनं प्रकाशश्च विद्यते} \]

The meaning of the compound sāttwadharma-gopta is as follows: The word sāttvata is derived from the word sāt, which here means non-existence of difference between jītāna and kriyāsakti. Then the word sāttvaka would refer to people for whom reality is of the nature of existence and light. The word dharma (second word in the compound) is the quality or ability that belongs to sāttvakas. This dharma has to do with the creation and destruction of objects, which transcends all other paths. This dharma transcends all other paths because sāttvakas are able to continuously engage in experiencing and (immediately) renouncing worldly objects. Gopta is one who protects the dharma of the sāttvakas.

This very secret presented in this chapter I have explained in details in my commentary on Devistotra. Those noble people who are properly instructed in this secret already know it. Why then try to explain this same secret again and again in ever clearer language?

\[ \text{अनादिमध्यानमनन्तवीर्यं} \\
\text{मन्त्रबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेनत्रम्} \\
\text{पश्चायम त्वा दीमहुताश्ववर्कं} \\
\text{स्वतेज्ञा विश्रुपं तपतम्} \]

19. I see that you are without beginning, middle or end, possessing unlimited power, innumerable arms, with the moon and the sun as your eyes, with blazing fire as your face; you are burning the entire universe with your radiance.

\[ \text{द्यापूर्धियोरिदमन्तरं हि} \\
\text{विद्यां त्वाधिकेन दिशश्च सर्वं} \]

20. This space between heaven and earth is pervaded by you alone, and also all the directions. On seeing this extraordinary form of yours, O Great Soul, the three worlds tremble.

\[ \text{अभी हि त्वा सुरस्वय विशिष्टं} \\
\text{केचिद्वित्तता: प्राज्ञलयो गुणानि} \]

21. The throngs of gods enter into you and some, frightened, extol you with folded hands. Assemblages of great Rsis and perfected beings exclaiming, “Let there be prosperity”, worship you with hymns rich in praises.

\[ \text{रुद्रदिव्यं वस्त्रो च साध्यम्} \\
\text{विश्रुपिनौ मरुत्रसप्तपाश्च} \\
\text{गन्धर्ववक्ष्यसुरसिद्धस्थ्रु} \\
\text{वीक्ष्यन्ति त्वं विस्मिताश्व सर्वं} \]
22. The *Rudras*, the *Ādityas*, the *Vasūs*, the *Śādhyas*; the *Viśva devas*, the two *Āśvins*, the *Maruts*, the ancestral spirits and the assemblages of *Gāndharvas*, *Yakṣas*, *Asuras* and perfected beings, all behold you and are amazed.

रूपं महतेऽङ्गिने सङ्करितेऽङ्गिने महाबाहोऽङ्गिने।
बहुवाहुःऽङ्गिने बहुःऽङ्गिने।

लोकः प्रव्यःधितास्तःः॥ २३॥

23. O Mighty-armed one, having seen your great form, of many mouths and eyes, of many arms, thighs and feet, of many bellies, terrible with many tusks, the worlds tremble and so do I.

नभः स्पृष्टः दीर्घं कर्णं
वधानन्ते दीर्घविशालन्ते।

दृश्योऽङ्गिने प्रव्यःधितास्तःः॥ २४॥

24. Having seen you touching the sky, shining with many colors, with the mouth opened wide, and enormous and burning eyes, my innermost self is deeply troubled and I do have neither stability nor peace, O Viṣṇu.

दंश्याकर्णानि सः ते मुखानि
दृश्येऽङ्गिने कालानलस्तःःः॥

दिव्यो न जाने न लभे च शर्म
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास॥ २५॥

25. Just by seeing your many mouths possessing terrible tusks, resembling the fire at the time of dissolution, I lose the sense of direction and find no peace. Show mercy, O God of Gods, dwelling place of the universe.

अमी सः सः सः धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्रः।
सः सः सः सः हृदयाविनिपातस्य॥ २६॥

भीष्मो श्रोणं सूर्यपुनस्तथास्यः।
सहायस्य दैवीयः योध्यमुखः॥ २६॥

26. All these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra along with the hosts of kings and also Bhiṣma, Droṇa and Karna along with our leading warriors,

वक्त्राणि ते तत्रमाणाणि विशिष्टं
दंश्याकर्णानि भयानकानि।

केचिद्विल्गः दशनान्तरेऽरुषु
सन्दृर्षयते चूम्भितं दृष्टमाहः॥ २७॥

27. They are all rushing into your mouths, dreadful due to their tusks. Some are found caught between your teeth and can be seen with their heads crushed into powder.

नानाश्रृः पुरुषेष्वर्द्यानानि
विशिष्टं ते वक्त्रमविचित्त्ररुपम्।

वौःधितिः धार्तराष्ट्रश्च योध:।
श्रेष्ठे: कृत्ता विविधे: सः सः एव॥ २८॥

28. The warriors belonging to Yuddhiśthira’s and Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s army are entering your unimaginable mouth, being forced to do so by creatures of various kinds, and are pierced by many weapons.

त्वेऽन्तजसा निहता नृणेऽते
नन्दाही त्वेऽन्तजसा नविविद्या:।

यथा नदीनां बहृवोऽयुवेक:।
समुद्रमेवाभिभुक्ता वज्रतिः॥ २९॥
29. As the water currents flow towards the ocean, in the same way, burnt by your fire, these warriors enter into your body.

तथा तबामी नरलोकवीरा\nविश्वति वक्त्राणयभितो ज्वलनति।
यथा प्रदीपं ज्वलनं पतञा\nविश्वति नाशाय समुदंबेगः।
तथेऽव नाशाय विश्वति लोका\nस्तवापि वक्त्राणि समुदंबेगः॥ 30 ॥

30. Just as the moths enter a burning fire with great speed only to meet their destruction, in the same way, creatures enter rushing with great speed into your mouth just to meet their own destruction. The same is happening with these heroes among men, who enter your mouth from all sides.

लेलिहास्य प्रसामानः समन्ता\nश्रीकांसमग्राण्यदेवनाम्बलदिः।
तेजोभिपुर्यं जगत्समंग्रं\nभास स्तवबोगः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो॥ 31 ॥

31. O Viṣṇu, with your blazing mouth you lick up, swallowing on all sides, entire worlds of living beings. Filling the entire universe with your splendor, your terrible rays scorch.

आङ्ग्याहि मे को भवानुग्रहं\nनयो जित्वा ते देववर प्रसीठ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवतत्मांद्रि\nन हि प्रजानामि तत्र प्रवृत्तिम॥ 32 ॥

32. Tell me who you are, possessing this terrible form. I salute to you, O Best of Gods; show your grace to me. I desire to know your primordial nature but I have no means for understanding your activities.

तब प्रवृत्ति न वेदिः—केनायथेर्नेतुश्रीवायुव्रतेति॥ 32 ॥

I do not understand what you are doing. I do not understand for what purpose you are showing to me this horrible form of yours.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कालोद्यमि लोकक्षयकुच्छवतः\nश्रीकांसमाहरुमिह प्रवृत:।
ऋतोपि त्वा न भविष्यति सर्वे\nयेजवसिंहता: प्रत्यथिनक्रिया चोधः॥ 33 ॥

The Lord said:

33. I am the powerful time, instrumental in the destruction of the world. I am the impulse that absorbs the world back into myself. Even without your involvement, these warriors arrayed in the opposing armies will cease to exist.

तम्मात्त्वमुनिष्ठ यशो लभस्व\nजित्वा शान्ति: भुद्क्ष्य राज्यं समुद्रम।।
पद्येते निःहतो: पूर्वेवै\nनिमित्तमात्रं भव सवयसाचिनु॥ 34 ॥

34. Therefore, O Skilful Archer, stand up and earn fame. Defeat your enemies and enjoy lordship over the Earth. All these warriors have already been killed by Me, you are simply the instrument.
35. Do not fear; kill Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Jayadratha, Karna, as well as other heroes. I have already killed them all. Fight, you will defeat your enemies.

In regard to Arjuna’s question the Lord gives the following answer: Consciousness, which is pure, impure and a mixture of these two, forcefully swallows the objects of the universe as consisting of knowledge and ignorance. In this chapter, the Lord has briefly presented a secret. However, let this brief statement by the Lord be for those who are capable of grasping this secret behind the consciousness as being expressed only through a few words. Why should we waste our energy in uselessly writing more and more lines explaining this topic?

The sentence, “All these warriors have already been killed by Me”, stated by the Lord in verse 34 is the answer to the question that Arjuna raised in chapter 2 verse 6, “I do not know which is preferable for us: that we should defeat them or they should defeat us.”

Saṅjaya said:

36. Having heard Kṛṣṇa’s instruction, the Diamonded One, trembling and terrified, with his hands folded first saluted, then fell prostrate, and thus spoke with choked voice to the Lord:

Arjuna said:

37. It is right, O Hṛṣīkeśa, that the world should rejoice and delight in your praise. Terrified demons flee in all directions and the assemblages of perfected beings are saluting you.

The word prakṛtyā here means ‘by praising’, ‘by means of praise’.

38. And why would they not bow to you, O Great Being, who are the original cause, superior even to Brahmā? O God of Gods, you are infinite and the resting place of your creation. You are imperishable, existence, non-existence and that which transcends both.
41. Salutations to you, salutations a thousand times, salutations to you again and again. Salutations to you from the front and behind, salutations to you, O Everything, on all sides.

42. O God, you possess immeasurable capabilities, there is none in the three worlds to be compared with you. You are of limitless power and immeasurable valor; you pervade everything, therefore you are everywhere.
46. Therefore, I salute and prostrate my body, I ask you, mighty and praiseworthy being, for your grace; you should bear with me as the father bears with his son, the friend with his friend, and the lover with the beloved.

47. Your divine actions are amazing, remembered by the Rṣis of old. There is no other creator of the universe but you. You are its maintainer, creator, pervader, and all the creatures.

48. How could it be possible for me to describe to others your wonderful form, which is difficult to bear? You alone are the creator of everything, O Pervader of the Universe, therefore, you are everything.

49. The performance of the most amazing action is not difficult for you. In regard to action, there is no other being that can compare with you. There is no limit to your qualities, lustre, might or grandeur.
50. Having seen that which has never been seen before, I am thrilled yet my mind trembles with fear. O God, reveal to me your original form, be gracious, O God of Gods, Resting Abode of the Universe.

51. O Thousand-armed Being, I wish to see you as before, wearing a diadem, mace and with discus in your hand, O Possessor of All Forms, take on that four-armed form of yours.

52. I have graciously revealed to you, O Arjuna, My highest form through My own yoga. This form of Mine made up of light, cosmic, eternal and primordial has never been seen by any other living being.

53. In the world of humans, I in My highest form cannot be seen by any other being but you, O Hero of the Kurus, even if they follow the path of Vedic sacrifice, charity, ritual activity or severe austerities.

54. Having seen My terrible and fearsome form, do not shiver or become confused. Behold My old form again and become cheerful and fear-free.

55. Having in this way advised Arjuna, the Lord again revealed his earlier form; after assuming this more gentle appearance, that great being consoled the terrified Arjuna.
After the notion of duality has completely disappeared, the Lord grants to Arjuna the experience of being established in the fully pacified Brahman. Then the Lord shows his nobility by taking his gentle form.

The Lord said:

57. You have seen that form of Mine extraordinarily difficult to see; even gods are constantly craving to see it.

58. In this form in which you have seen Me, I cannot be seen even through the study of the Vedas, austerities, charity or through sacrifices.

59. My nature is such, O Arjuna, that I can be known and seen as I truly am and also be merged with only through undivided devotion, O Scorcher of the Enemies.

60. He who performs acts only for Me, for whom I am the highest goal, who is devoted to Me, free from attachment and enmity for all living beings, he, O Pāṇḍava, comes to Me.
Chapter 12

The Lord said:

2. Those who meditate on Me, who have merged their minds into Me, who are permanently established in yoga, possessed of supreme faith, them I consider most perfect in yoga.

By this verse, it is proposed that those are the best devotees who have attained samāvēsa, the state in which one is naturally or spontaneously identified with that Maheśvara.

3. But those who worship the imperishable, the indefinable, the unmanifested, the all-pervading, the unimaginable, the unchanging and the immovable, the constant,

3. The purpose of asking this question for Arjuna is to get the understanding of the differences between two types of devotion. The first type is devotion to the pure Brahman and the second to Īśvara, the Brahman with form.

5. The trouble of those whose thoughts are set on the unmanifested is greater, for the abode of the unmanifested is hard to attain by embodied beings.

Those who are devoted to the imperishable Brahman, which is one's own self, they superimpose on their own self the qualities that belong to Īśvara, such as, all-pervasiveness, etc. Those who meditate
on the formless Brahman also attain the highest reality. However, on
the way, they experience more difficulties. One who is devoted to the
formless Brahman needs to make a double effort. First, he needs to
superimpose eight qualities 82 such as sinlessness onto his own ātmān
and then meditate on that ātmān. One goes through all this trouble in
spite of the existence of Īśvara, who is easily available and who is
glorious by means of his self-established (eight) qualities.

"Ye tu satvāṇi kāraṇāṇi madhyāsanvasthāyatām
ānabhyayād ca yogeṇa maṁ ĪŚVAYATAN UPAṢAṬE || 6 ||

6. But for those who meditating on Me renounce their
actions in Me, take Me as their highest goal, worship
Me with one-pointed yoga,

tetāmaṁ svamudrataṁ mūryumamārasanārātām
∴ bhāvam ∴ nīcāravārdh māyāvēṣṭiṣāt kramam || 7 ||

7. For those whose mind has merged with Me, I will
soon be the deliverer from the ocean of continuous births
and deaths, O Pārtha.

māyāvam mān ādhaś tam mādhyābuddhi nīvāṣayān
nīvāṣyāsī tāṁ māyāvam yogeṇuṇśaṃśiṣṭaṁ || 8 ||

8. Merge your mind with Me alone and establish your
intellect in Me. Having thus become established in yoga,
you will live in Me.

prāṇaḥkəṇḍaḥ ye tu sarvāṃ madhyāsvāmaṇtham, tetāmaṁ svamudrataṁ;
∴ sakalavātipādakālasya|| chetāṁ ābhāṣāṅ ca īŚyamātmaḥ; 
∴ tadā ca ēva ābhāṣāṁ
yoghoṣāsaṃśiṣṭaḥ||

82 According to Candogya Upaniṣad, VIII. 7. 1, the eight qualities of the ātmān
are: the ātmān is free from sin, he is not subject to old age, he is free from death,
sorrow, hunger and thirst, all his desires are fulfilled and he possesses unfailing
will.

Chapter 12

‘Viṣṇuṣṭhākṣarāṇasannidhitvātīśvānśādhānaṁ
viṣṇuṣṭhānāya yadā kāmaṁ bādhoṣhaṁṣaṁyate

N sa taṁ sadārthā pūrnasavāhīnti ṣaḥ chittaṁ
yatikāhānāśvānाः।

‘I the Brahman am the deliverer for those who, according to the
instruction given before, surrender everything to me. I am their de-
leverer in a sense that I free them from all the difficulties such as
obstacles, etc. The meaning of the word ‘absorption’ (āvēṣā) of the
individual consciousness with the divine has already been explained.
Therefore, this alone is the best yoga because this yoga is natural,
i.e., it is attained without any means (upāya 83). As I said in my stotra:

O Goddess, when one develops a particular type of knowl-
edge through the practice of any limb of yoga, such as ritu-
als, postures, control of the sense organs or deep medita-

82 As it will become clear from the verse quoted below, by the word ukṛtrimatvād
Abhinavagupta refers to the highest state of yoga attained without using any means
(anupāya). In Tantrasāra, Abhinavagupta describes anupāya in the following way,
"A yogin, having ascertained his teacher’s words only once, and being pierced by
the firm falling of grace (saktipāta), begins to understand that his absorption in
the heart of consciousness is permanent and devoid of any means. As it is stated in the
Śāstras, Paramesvara is the light of one’s own self, therefore how could he be
accomplished by any means (upāya)? Furthermore, one’s own nature is eternal,
therefore, the attainment of one’s own nature cannot be dependent upon means.
The recognition of one’s own form is not reliant upon any means because it is self-
manifested. The removal of the veil (which conceals one’s own nature) is not
dependent upon means because of the impossibility of the existence of any kind of
concealment. Entering into one’s own nature cannot be accomplished by any means
because of the absence of difference between one who is entering into (one’s own
nature), and that which is supposed to be entered into.” (Tantrasāra, ch. 2, p. 9).
tion, then that knowledge should not be understood to be your permanently manifested and naturally flowing state, which could be experienced here and now in all the three states of consciousness. But when without any limbs of yoga, one takes recourse to the consciousness bringing her under control, who shines without any means following the horripilation, trembling and tears; then the fire of consciousness is instantaneously cognised and consciousness, showing no regard for the body, becomes perfectly manifested. It is at that time, O Divine Lady, that your body becomes instrumental in knowing Śiva, who then remains without any support and becomes destroyer of the trap that makes the individual soul bound.

अथावेशायित्वं चित्रं न शक्रोष्य मयि स्थिरम्।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छायुं धनङ्ग्य॥ ९॥

9. If, however, you are unable to firmly place your mind in Me, then seek to attain Me by the practice of yoga, O Winner of Wealth.

तीव्रतत्थाभवचक्किन्त्र परिप्रसादसिद्धिगुरुचरणानुग्रहं च बिना दुसृज्ञ आवेशः।—इत्यभ्यासः॥ १॥

Absorption (āvesā) is difficult to attain without the firm grace (tīvra sāktipāta)84 of the Lord and without the grace of the teacher who has become pleased by the devoted service of the disciple. Therefore, one should meditate to gain the experience of āvesā.

अभ्यस्येव्यवस्थं नमस्कर्मपरमो भव।
मदर्थमयि कर्माणि कुर्भिन्द्रिमवायव्यसि॥ १०॥

10. If you are unable to seek Me through the practice of yoga, then devote yourself entirely to My works; even by performing actions for My sake you will attain perfection.

अथ्यासौपि न शक्रवते—विच्छादिभिभवात्। अतस्तत्तालं कर्म—
पूजानुसारायमहोमादिना कुरु॥ १०॥

If however, you are not capable of practicing yoga because of being overwhelmed by obstacles, then for the sake of their destruction you need to perform pūjā, japa, homa or study of the Vedas.

अथ्यतद्वस्त्तकोशसि कर्तृं मद्योऽगमास्थितः।
सर्वकर्मफललयां तत्: कुरु यतात्यावान्॥ ११॥

11. If you are incapable of doing even this, then resort to union with Me, renounce the fruits of action and act with self-control.

यदि च भागस्त्तकर्म कर्तृं न शक्रोहसि;—अज्जातात् शास्त्रोक्तक्रमावेदतात।
तत्तवं मयि संन्यासे: आत्मनिवेदनाङ्ग्रेयलयेत। अमुमेवाच्ययमाश्यस्त लघु-प्रक्रियायाम मयेवोकः;—

‘ऊनाधिकविवासां पौर्णयविविषयं जत्तम्।
यचावधानविस्मितं बुढ़बुढित्विस्मितं च यत्॥
तस्यां मम सर्वेश भक्तयोगस्य दुर्मित:।
श्रद्धायं कुपया संभो यतात्त्वं कहणाप:॥
अते न सत्सर्वयोगेन तवालां नित्येदे।
पुनर्निर्बन्धणमहें दुःखानि नैमि पानात्तम॥

इति। पारंश्रेष्ठे हि निद्राधारासेवे आत्मनिवेदनेऽवयंवेदाभिरोऽय:॥ ११॥

तद्वद तत्थ्यायमुपस्त्रहृदयेते—

If you are not capable of doing any of these acts because of ignorance, i.e., not knowing the process of performing all these acts as instructed by the sāstras, then renounce whatever you do to the
Lord by dedicating your own self to Him. Having this very secret of the *Gītā* in my mind I said in my *Laghvī Prakriyā* 85:

Whatever act I may have performed without knowing its good or bad consequences or knowing the proper order of its performance; whatever act I may have performed without concentration or with any other lapse of my intellect; all of that, O Śambhu, you who are compassionate, forgive me, your miserable and ignorant devotee. Through this *stotra* I surrender myself to you, and let me never again become the abode of misery for no good reason.

This is the philosophy behind the surrender to God expressed in all the texts of the *Śaiva* system of thought.

Next, this very idea will be brought to its conclusion.

12. Better indeed is knowledge than practice, better than knowledge is meditation, better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of action, (because) peace immediately follows renunciation.

13. He who has no ill feeling for any being, who is friendly and compassionate, free from the desire to possess and the feeling of I-ness, even-minded in pain and pleasure and patient,

*Maitrī*—the absence of bad feelings for others. Similarly, *karuṇā* is one who possesses compassion. *Mamaka* is the feeling of possession such as, “this belongs to me.” *Ahañkāra*, the feeling of I-ness, is for example a feeling that one has when one thinks, “I am generous”, “I am powerful”, “I am forgiving”. One who is free from these two, i.e., the feeling of possession and the feeling of I-ness, is called *nīrmanda* and *nirahāraṁkāra*. *Kṣamā* is the absence of ill-feeling for the enemy who did something wrong to us.

85 *Laghvī Prakriyā* is a devotional *stotra* written by Abhinavagupta which is no longer available.

The *āvesā* type of knowledge, which is the absorption in the divine, is better than practice (*abhyāsa*). This is because that knowledge is the result of practice. However, meditation (*āhāya*), which is the identity with God, is better than the *āvesā* type of knowledge. This is because through meditation one attains the desired object, which excels (*visīsyate*) all other objects of knowledge. When meditation is completed, i.e., when identity with God is realized, only then it becomes possible to renounce the results of actions. Otherwise, how can one surrender the fruits of action to God, if God’s nature remains hidden from him? When one is able to renounce the fruits of actions then one attains the utmost peace. Therefore, among all of these various types of knowledge the *āvesā* type of knowledge is primary because it is at the root of all other types of knowledge.
19. Who is balanced in blame and praise, silent, content with anything, free from the routine of daily activities, possessing a stable mind, one who is full of devotion in this way is dear to Me.

20. But those who with faith, absorbed in Me, honour this immortal wisdom as described above, those devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

The word aniketah describes a yogin who is not limited by any particular duty but does whatever needs to be done, depending on the situation. Such a yogin does not think in this way, “This is my duty and I need to do only this.” One who is not touched by anything that comes his way, one who remains balanced and at ease in his heart, and always engaged in meditation on Paramēśvara, such a yogin quickly attains liberation.

SUMMARY VERSE:

The yogin absorbed in God and taken by the bliss of that absorption spontaneously experiences the reality of the Brahman in all states and conditions of life.
3. Know Me as the knower of the field in all the fields, O Bhārata; the knowledge of the field and its knower, and know that through this knowledge alone I can be realized.

The field (kṣetra) is the body of worldly beings where the seed of action (karman) is nurtured. In the case of worldly beings the embodied self (jīvātma) is called the knower of the field (kṣetrajñāh), who remains polluted by temporary impurities. However, in the case of the enlightened ones, the embodied self is called kṣetra. This can be examined through the derivation of the word kṣetra. The word kṣetra is derived from the root kṣi, which means 'to destroy'. This is because the embodied self destroys the bond of karman by experiencing the results of actions. The suffix trā can be derived from the root trie because it is the embodied self who protects himself from the fear of birth and death. Therefore, for the people who have realized the embodied self as kṣetra, the Vāsudevattva is kṣetrajñāhah. This is to say, that Vāsudeva is one who makes this kṣetra known to the embodied self. This is because the root vid, which is synonymous with the root jña, in this context possesses causative power. Therefore, that by whose grace the ignorant individual self (jīvatma) attains wisdom, that alone is kṣetrajñāhah and nothing else.

The difference between jīvatma and paramātma is as follows: when the same reality, i.e., ātman, assumes a limited form, it is called jīvatma, and when it assumes the unlimited form it is called paramātma.

Although the word mama in this verse is used in the genitive case, it has the power of the accusative. Therefore, the expression māma mama means that "I could be known (by that knowledge)."
The word Avyaktam here stands for Prakṛti. The word indriyāṇi refers to the ten sense organs plus the mind. The objects of the sense organs are: sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

The word cetanā stands for Puruṣa, who is the power of consciousness.

Dhrti is the power of holding the vital energy (prāṇa) intact in the form of assurance or hope, which makes one think, “This is sufficient for me. What would be the purpose of acquiring anything else? May I always be successful in this way”. This kind of feeling, which is known as passion (rāga) in the esoteric texts of Śaivism, is present in all living beings from Brahmā to an insect in regard to either an act undertaken or completed or any act undertaken under desire or anger.

Thus, kṣetra and kṣetrajña have been explained. Next the Lord will go on to explain the nature of knowledge.
8. Humility, integrity, non-violence, patience, simplicity, service to the teacher, purity, stability and self-control.

9. Indifference to the objects of the senses, absence of egoism, and the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age, sickness, and pain.

10. Non-attachment, absence of clinging to son, wife, home and so on, and a constant even-mindedness to all desirable and undesirable happenings.

11. Unwavering devotion to Me through one-pointed yoga, abiding in solitary places, distaste for a crowd of people.

12. Being established in the knowledge of the highest reality, insight into the ultimate goal of the knowledge of reality; all this is declared to be knowledge and all that is different from it is ignorance.

By the word ananyayogena it is meant that the yogin realizes that there is nothing beyond the Lord Parameśvara. This type of firm conviction is called yoga, which enables one to develop unwavering devotion to God. Such devotion is unwavering either because of the absence of desire, which normally creates wavering, i.e., fluctuations of the mind. Or, (even in the presence of desire in one’s mind), the devotion is not disturbed because desires, which are fluctuations of the mind, become identified with Paramesvara.

Thus, one should always think in this way regarding devotion. To behave in a different way would be a sign of ignorance coming out of egoism, etc.

Next, the Lord will explain what it is to be known by this knowledge.

And the tongue will be pleased with the enjoyment of the sky.
15. He has the appearance of the qualities of the senses and yet is freed from all of the senses, unattached and yet supporting all, free from the gunas and yet experiencing them.

16. He dwells outside and within all beings, he is unmoving and also moving, he is not known because he is subtle, he is far away and yet he is near.

17. He is undivided and yet he appears to be divided in all beings. He is to be known as the sustainer of the creatures, their destroyer and their creator.

18. He is the Light of all lights, described to be beyond darkness; he is knowledge, the object of knowledge and that which is attainable through knowledge. He is seated in the hearts of all.

With the adjectives such as anadimatparam, etc., the Lord preaches non-difference among all different types of knowledge expressed in different philosophical systems. Knowledge of non-diff-

ference is instrumental in removing all doubts regarding the non-dual nature of the Brahman. I have already commented on these various adjectives. What would be the purpose of commenting again on the same subject?

19. In this way, the field, knowledge and the object of knowledge have been briefly described; My devotee who understands this merges into My highest nature.

One who knows these three, i.e., field (kṣetra), knowledge (jñāna), and object of knowledge (jñeya) is my true devotee. He unavoidably merges with me.

In the following verse, the Lord will go on to examine what he has just defined in this verse.

20. Know both Prakṛti and Puruṣa to be beginningless; and know also that the modifications and gunas are born of Prakṛti.
It could be said that *Prakṛti* is also eternal, because it has nothing else as its cause. Modifications of *Prakṛti* are objects such as a pot, etc.

21. *Prakṛti* is said to be instrumental in creating the causal relation, and the *Puruṣa* is said to be the cause in regard to the experience of pleasure and pain.

*Prakṛti* is the cause of causal relationship. *Puruṣa*, being dominant between the two, is the enjoyer of *Prakṛti*.

22. *Puruṣa*, abiding in *Prakṛti*, enjoys the *guna* born of *Prakṛti*; attachment to the *guna* is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.

*Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are just like a cripple and a blind man, because for their functioning they depend on each other.

23. The highest *Puruṣa* in this body is said to be the witness, the approver, the supporter, the experiencer, the great Lord and the highest Self.

The nature of *Puruṣa* is referred to by the authors of śāstras under different names such as witness (upadraṣṭā), etc. The entire creation is nothing but *Prakṛti* and its fourteen evolutes. Next comes *Puruṣa*. Both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are beginningless and permanent. This is to say, when they merge into the *Brahman* and become identical with it, as there is nothing outside of the *Brahman*, who is the highest reality.

Therefore, the Lord said:

24. He who knows *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* together with its *guna*, whatever his present condition might be, such a person is not born again.

possess the power of action. Furthermore, *Puruṣa* needs *Prakṛti* for the purpose of liberation, which in this system is discriminative knowledge (viveka khyāti) between *Puruṣa* and the *guna*. On the other hand, *Prakṛti*, who is the object of enjoyment, needs *Puruṣa* who is the enjoyer. In *Sāṃkhya* Karikās 21, we read: "For the perception of Nature by the Spirit (*Puruṣa*) and for the Isolation of the Spirit, there is union of both, — like that of the halt [cripple] and the blind; and from this union proceeds evolution." (Translated by Ganganath Jha)
The yogin who through realization of the non-dual nature of the Brahman knows the real nature of Purusa, Prakrti, its gunas and their modifications, is free regardless of the conditions in which he lives.

25. Some perceive the Self in the self by the self through meditation; others by Samkhya and Yoga and still others by the path of action.

26. Yet others, ignorant of this path, worship hearing it from others, and they too cross beyond death by their devotion to the teaching they have heard.

Some respectfully accept this type of pre-eminent knowledge as being identical with their atman. Some others respectfully accept this knowledge according to the teachings of Samkhya and Yoga, as previously described. Some others accept this knowledge to be yoga of action. Yet others, who are not familiar with the nature of this knowledge, show interest and want to know about it, respectfully accept what they hear from others. This kind of people also cross the ocean of samsara. This is because Brahmatattva being respectfully accepted in any way helps one cross over samsara. Therefore, one should always be dedicated to meditation on the highest reality.

27. Know, O Best of Bharatas, that whatever being is born, moving or unmovable, it is through the union of the field (ksetra) and the knower of the field (ksetrajna).

28. He who sees the highest Lord dwelling alike in all beings and never perishing when they perish, he truly sees.

29. Perceiving the Lord to be equally present everywhere, he does not hurt his atman by his atman and then he attains the highest goal.

The yogin, who possesses a balanced mind, perceives everything as identical with his own atman and therefore is not intent on hurting his own self (atman). This is to say that he is not made to fall into the ocean of samsara, which is difficult to cross.
30. He who sees that all actions are performed only by Prakṛti and that the self is not the doer, he truly sees.

The yogin who with a firm conviction thinks in the following way: “It is Prakṛti which acts and not me”, such a yogin, even if completely engaged in activity, in reality does not act. This is what the Lord meant when he said that such a yogin is not a doer.

31. When he realizes that the multiplicity of beings is resting in the One, and that from that One alone multiplicity is spreading out, then he attains the Brahman.

32. Because the supreme self is without beginning, imperishable and without guṇas, and although it dwells in the body, O Son of Kunti, it neither acts nor gets stained.

33. Just as the all-pervading ākāśa is not stained because of its subtlety, in the same way, the ātman, present in the body everywhere, is not stained.
CHAPTER 14

The Lord said:
1. I will again explain that supreme knowledge, the best of all types of knowledge, knowing which all sages have gone from this world to the highest perfection.

In this chapter, the knowledge already explained by the Lord will be discussed again. This time however, emphasis will be placed in delineating the nature of three guṇas, which will be analyzed in great detail.

With the second part of the verse beginning with, ‘knowing which’ the Lord indicates that this knowledge is an old experience, which was well known to the sages and Rṣis of the ancient times.

2. Those who have taken refuge in this knowledge have become identical with Me; they are not born even at the time of creation; nor do they tremble at the time of dissolution.
The verb vyathanti is grammatically incorrect. In classical Sanskrit this verb is used only in atmanepada, but here it is used in parasmaipada. However, the language of the Bhagavadgītā is equal in authority to the Vedas, therefore it should be understood as correct. The same should be understood for any other nominal or verbal ending used incorrectly in this text.

Next the Lord will describe the sequence of creation.

मम योनिमहत्वः तत्स्मिनाभ्य ददायस्यम्।
समभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत॥ ३ ॥

3. I (whose nature is highest bliss) possess the great power of Freedom (svātantryāsakti), who is My womb, and in her I place the seed; from this the origin of all beings proceeds, O Bhārata.

हातथे ज्ञाते तत्कारणे च, सुकरं हि हनम्। मम—सत्वद्विपदेश्य—
परमानन्दरूपस्य महद्वृह्य—वृंहकालियसिद्धिः रञ्जः। आत्मलयमेव हि विमर्शः
शक्तिमालयमाहमवेदोनानाधायं। अनुगृहार्थं संसारमयां। ॥ ३ ॥

अतः एव—

When one knows the cause of that which he wants to abandon, then it is easier to give up that particular thing. ॥ ५ ॥

The pronoun mama refers to the Lord, who is of the nature of the highest bliss, impossible to describe. Mahādbrahman is sakti, who is instrumental in creating the entire universe. Having taken recourse to my own sakti called vimārśa, I place limited souls, who are eternal by nature, in the world for the purpose of obliging them.

Therefore,

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय तूर्तय: सम्भवति यः।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिः बीजप्रदः पिता॥ ४ ॥

4. Whatever forms, O Son of Kuntī, are produced in any wombs, the great svātantryāsakti is their womb and I am the father who gives the seed.

सर्वयोनिषु योनिन्द्रु अतिकारणयावृहका भगववचारकः—सकलसंसार—
बमस्वभावः माता। पिता तवह—शक्तिमालयदेश्य: ॥ ४ ॥

This sakti of the Lord is instrumental in creation in all the wombs, because of being the original cause. Therefore, we can say that the sakti of the Lord is the mother of the universe, because her nature is to manifest the universe (lit., vomiting it out). I the Lord, possessor of that sakti, whose nature is difficult to describe, am the father of this universe.

सर्वं रजस्तम इति गुण: प्रकृतिसम्भवः।
निबृत्तति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम्। ॥ ५ ॥

5. The three guṇas, sattva, rajas and tamas born of Prakṛti bind down the embodied and the imperishable dweller in the body, O Mighty-armed.

देही चायमात्वतः सत्तरजस्तमोभिरभिर्मर्मपर्यन्तनाय भोगाय
निबृत्तः इति ॥ ५ ॥

The embodied self, who mistakes his body to be the atman, is bound by the three guṇas for the purpose of enjoyment of worldly objects, which eventually culminates in attaining enlightenment.

perfectly and always united and can never under any circumstances or on any level of existence be separated. For her existence vimārśa is not dependent on anything outside of herself. Therefore, she possesses absolute autonomy and freedom and in this respect she is also referred to as svātantra. In the process of expansion or creation vimārśa gives rise to other powers, i.e., icchā, jñāna and kriya, which in turn give rise to creation.
6. Of these, sattva, because of its pure nature causes illumination and health; it binds, O Blameless One, by clinging to happiness and knowledge.

7. O Son of Kunti, know rajas to be of the nature of passion, springing from craving and attachment. It binds the embodied beings by attachment to action.

8. Know that tamas is born of ignorance, which deludes all embodied beings; it binds them, O Bhārata, by the qualities of negligence, indolence, and sleep.

A human body is very difficult to attain. Attainment of a human body is the result of hundreds of meritorious acts carried out over a long period of time. The only purpose of having a human body is for an embodied soul to attain liberation. The word negligence (pramāda) refers to one who, although possessing a human body, neglects the practice that leads to liberation. It is said in the sāstras:

Even with the most precious jewels one cannot buy a single moment of human life. One who misuses human life is called pramāda, the lowest of all human beings.

Laziness (alasya) is slowness in regard to the auspicious acts that should be performed. Sleep (nidrā) is spending too much time on the wrong path. 

9. Sattva attaches one to happiness, rajas to action, O Bhārata, but tamas, veiling knowledge, attaches to negligence.

The word sanjayati means ‘to bring together’, ‘to join’, ‘to connect’ or ‘attach’.

10. When overpowering rajas and tamas, sattva increases, O Bhārata; rajas increases when overpowering sattva and tamas and also tamas increases by overpowering sattva and rajas.
Sattva increases when rajas and tamas are suppressed. Rajas increases when sattva and tamas are suppressed. Tamas increases when sattva and rajas are suppressed. It is said, "Increase in the quantity of one guna takes place when the other two are suppressed."

When the light of knowledge shines forth in all the sense organs of the body, then it should be known that sattva predominates.

When rajas predominates, O Best of Bharatas, greed, activity, the undertaking of actions, restlessness and craving spring up.

When tamas predominates, O Son of Kurus, darkness, inertia, negligence and delusion are born.

The word sarvadvareṣu refers to the sense organs. When rajas increases, greed and its other modifications are gradually born one after another. In the same way, darkness and other modifications of tamas gradually increase as tamas increases.

14. If the embodied soul leaves this world when sattva predominates, then he attains the pure worlds belonging to those who know the highest.

When throughout the whole of one’s life one practices sattvic activities then the quality of sattva increases. Such a person at the time of death reaches an auspicious world.

15. If he leaves this world when rajas predominates, he is reborn among those attached to action; and if he is dissolved when tamas predominates, he is reborn in the wombs of the deluded.

A person who has practiced rājasic activities throughout his life is reborn among human beings in his next life. The human body brings about a mixture of happiness and suffering. Likewise, if one practices tāmasic activities throughout one's life then according to the degree of tamas, the person attains a body found in hell, the body of an insect or the body of a tree, etc.

Other commentators explain, that if at the time of death any of the three gunas increases (irrespective of the nature of the activity...
that one practices throughout one’s life) then one attains the world dominated by that particular guna. These commentators did not accurately understand the nature of their own bodies. This is because at the time of death, only confusion (moha) increases in the minds of all people. The following verses will confirm the correctness of my commentary.

16. They say that the fruit of meritorious action is pure and sattvic; the fruit of rajasic is suffering while the fruit of tamasic is ignorance.

17. Knowledge is born from sattva and greed from rajas; negligence and confusion, as well as ignorance, are born from tamas.

18. Those well-grounded in sattva attain the highest regions, those dominated by rajas abide in the middle worlds, while those controlled by the lowest guna live in the worlds below.

19. When the seer perceives no other agent than the gunas and also knows that which transcends the gunas, he merges into My being.

20. When the embodied soul transcends these three gunas that spring from the body, he is freed from birth, death, old age and suffering, and attains immortality.
24. He who remains the same in pain, pleasure and in sleep; who looks upon a clod, a stone, a piece of gold as of equal worth; who remains the same amid pleasant and unpleasant experiences; who possesses firm intellect; who regards blame and praise of himself as one,

मानावमायोरसुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारपरिग्रस्योऽः

सत्तार्थभलवागीणुःणातितीत:सउच्छे।।

25. He who is the same in grace and disgrace, impartial to friends and foes, and who has given up all initiative of action, he is said to have transcended the gunas.

यः अज्ञो निर्विकल्पिताः स एव जनानातः। तथा हि। नेपते-न

खसुणच्यते। अत्र चोपाय:- शारिन्दिरियदिस्वभावां एष यत्रवत्तम, नतु फलेन किंवद्धमभिषस्य इति सिद्धः बुँधः।।

-One who appears like an ignorant person (ajñah) but remains free from thought-constructs (vikalpa) is a person of knowledge because he is established in his own self. The word nengate in verse 23 means that the yogin cannot under any circumstances lose his own nature. The means (upāya) for attaining that state is a firm intellect. A person of firm intellect thinks in the following way, "The activity is the very nature of the body and senses, but I do not desire for the fruit of any activity."

26. He who serves me alone with unwavering devotion, transcending the three gunas, he too becomes ready for attaining the level of the Brahman,

अनेन मूलभूतमुपायमपदिशति, मां चेति। चशाब्दोवधारणे, यो मामेव सेवेते।

अनेन-फलादिसाकाशे मामाक्ः श्रवणि, फल प्रधानतया-इति निरस्तः। अत
I alone am the seat of the Brahman. If a person worships Me he himself becomes the Brahman. Otherwise, if one’s object of devotion is something different from the Lord then such an object of devotion might also grant liberation. However, that kind of liberation is not different from deep sleep.

**SUMMARY VERSE:**

A yogin, who has become free from error caused by ahāmkāra, as a result of the nectar of blooming devotion, such a yogin although living in the midst of the three guṇas is beyond their influence.

**ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिश्चाहमुमतस्यायव्यस्य च।**

**शाश्वस्त्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैवान्नितकस्य च॥ २७॥**

27. For I am the seat of the Brahman, who is immortal and imperishable, the eternal dharma and the absolute bliss.
अथ पञ्चदशःधायः

CHAPTER 15

The Lord said:

1. The śāstras speak of the imperishable aśvattha tree as having its roots above and branches below; its leaves are the Vedic hymns, and he who knows this is a knower of the Vedas.

2. Its branches extend below and above, and being nourished by the guṇas create the entire universe with sense objects as sprouts; below in the world of humans stretch forth the roots promoting action.

3. Its real form is not perceived in the world of humans, nor its end, its beginning, or its foundation. Having cut off this aśvattha tree along with its deep-grown roots by the sharp sword of not-attachment,

4. Then, that path must be sought, after reaching which there is no coming back; I seek refuge only in that primordial Puruṣa from whom has come forth this ancient current of creation.
5. Those who are freed from arrogance and delusion, who have overcome the evil of attachment, who are free from desires, who are permanently established in the highest self, who are free from the dualities such as pleasure and pain and are undeluded, attain that highest imperishable reality.

The expression gunaprayuddha, should be understood to mean the unfolding of the universe, beginning with the gods and ending with immovable creatures, through the operation of the three gunas. The lower roots (adhartanamalami) of the aśvattha tree are both good and bad action produced in the world of human beings. In the sentence, “Having cut off this tree (tam citvata) along with its deep-grown roots”, the verb ‘to cut’ applies to the noun ‘aśvattha tree’ as well as its adjective ‘deep-grown roots’ (svairddhamalam). However, in this case the emphasis is only on the adjective. As for example, in the Vedic injunction, “a stick holder (dandli) should issue orders to the servants” 98. If we apply this principle to the above quoted sentence, then it is not a tree but its deep-grown roots stretching below that should be cut. That highest reality, which was previously described by the expression ‘fully pacified’ (prasānta), is now described by the word ‘imperishable’ (avyayam).

6. The sun does not illuminate that place, or the moon, or the fire. That is my supreme abode from which those who attain it never return.

98 In this sentence, the emphasis is not on the person but on the stick.
beings’’ (mama eva aṁśa jīvaloke jīvabhūta sanātanaḥ) is used here as a linguistic device to convey a particular idea. However, one should not be mistaken on its real meaning. ⁹⁹

8. When the Lord takes up a body and when He departs from it, He takes these (six sense organs) along and moves, just as the wind carries away perfumes from their abodes.

The word avāpnoti means taking on a physical form, while the word utkṛṣmati is the giving up of that physical form. At the time of leaving a body, the ātman retains the six senses together with the subtle elements. Just as the all-pervading wind, when coming into contact with the earth (the resting place of all) takes along the smell (belonging to the earth), and carries it to different places. In the same way, the ātman (who retains and carries along the subtle body) enters into a new body along with the puryaṣṭaka. ¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ The real meaning of the above quoted statement by Lord Kṛṣṇa, according to Abhinavagupta, is that an individual soul is always and under any circumstances part of the totality of consciousness. If taken literally, this statement could be misunderstood and taken to support the philosophy of dualism. The explanation that Abhinavagupta offers is that it is only because of the limitations of language that Lord Kṛṣṇa expressed this idea in this particular way.

¹⁰⁰ Puryaṣṭaka is a technical term in Kashmir Shaivism, which stands for the subtle body. Subtle body consists of five tanmātras, intellect (buddhi), ego (ahamkāra) and mind (manas).

However, it is not only that the ātman is joined with puryaṣṭaka at the time of birth or death, but also while one is alive. The worldly activities such as standing, sitting, thinking or engaging in experiencing objects are carried out by puryaṣṭaka.

9. He experiences the objects of the senses by using the ear, the eye, the sense of touch and taste, the nose and also the mind.

10. The deluded do not perceive Him when he departs or is embodied or experiences the objects through the contact with the guṇas, but they who have the eye of wisdom perceive Him.

The word ‘mind’ (manas) in verse 9 refers to all internal sense organs, i.e., mind (manas), egoism (ahamkāra) and intellect (buddhi). Foolish people are not capable of perceiving the ātman, which lives in a body or is leaving one’s body to enter another body or is enjoying worldly objects. They are incapable of perceiving the ātman because their intellect is not subtle enough, that is to say, they are not enlightened.

On the other hand, enlightened ones possessing subtle intellects are capable of perceiving the ātman as being of the nature of continuous intense awareness of the highest reality in the form of consciousness. This is because they can maintain an unbroken samādhi, which is the result of continuous practice.
II. The yogins practicing yoga perceive Him as established in the self, but the unintelligent, whose souls are not purified, though practicing, do not find Him.

12. That light existing in the sun that illuminates this whole world, and also that light existing in the moon as well as in the fire, know that light to be Me.

13. And entering the earth, I support all beings by My vital energy; and becoming the moisture of the moon, I nourish all plants.

14. Becoming the universal fire in the bodies of living beings and mingling with the \textit{prāna} and \textit{apāna}, I digest the four kinds of food.
Three forms of light (tejas), namely the sun, moon and fire, as indicated in chapter 10, should be understood in terms of creation, maintenance and dissolution. According to my teacher, this verse makes clear that this universe, which is supported by the five elements functioning in various ways (both individually and collectively), is the glory of the highest Lord. For example, the rays of the sun are responsible for illumination and maintenance because of the identity of the sunrays with the elements of the earth (or: because the rays of the sun are mixed with the elements of the earth). This is expressed by the first pada of verse 12, “That light existing in the sun”, and the first pada of verse 13, “And entering the earth”.

The light of the moon is responsible for illumination and nourishment, because lunar light is a product of moisture and light. Therefore, the Lord said, “And also that light existing in the moon” and “becoming the moisture of the moon, I nourish all plants”. The light existing in the fire is characterized by illumination, dryness, burning, perspiration and digestive fire, and comes as a result of the mixture of earth, water, fire and air. This is why the Lord said, “Becoming the universal fire”, and “I am the light that exists in the fire”. Ākāśa, however, pervades all the other elements because of being of the nature of the empty space of consciousness.

Up to this point, the visible nature of the Lord has been presented and explained. Next, the highest self, whose nature is consciousness and freedom (svātantrya) on whom the visible form (of the Lord) is grounded, who is the highest identity in the form of Paramēśvara, who possesses freedom in knowing everything and who is the doer of all acts, will be explained.

15. And I am present in the hearts of all; from Me comes memory (smṛti), knowledge (jñāna) as well as concealment of the highest reality (apohana); I am one who is to be known in all the śāstras; I indeed am the author of Vedānta and I too am the knower of the Vedas.

The heart (hrdaya) is of all knowables such as a jar, etc. That heart is of the nature of consciousness of freedom (svātantrya), which contains within itself all objects. In that heart, vimāraśa takes the form of aham. And from that vimāraśa emerges knowledge in the form of mahāśrṣṭi, which is that which did not exist before. “This is a pot” is the type of knowledge (jñāna) which rejects the all-comprehensive nature of that highest knowledge. Its result is the concealment of that highest reality through the apohana śakti of the Lord. This concealment creates limited and uncertain knowledge. This

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1. Hṛdaya is the universal heart, the very core of the consciousness underlining and permeating the entire universe.
2. Aham vimāraśa is the creative I-consciousness of the highest Lord.
3. Mahāśrṣṭi is transcendental or undifferentiated creation. This is the creation of everything that will later exist as the visible universe on the transcendental level. It is the creation from Śuddhavidyā tattva to Anāśrita Śiva.
4. According to the Kashmir Shaivism system, the world is not made of matter but consciousness. The manifestation of the universe is reflection (pratibimba) of that what already exists within the consciousness. Appearance (abhāsa) is yet another name for reflection (pratibimba). In the process of manifestation, various abhāsas, which in reality are not different from consciousness, appear as if different from consciousness and from each other. This power of differentiation, which conceals the highest reality, is technically called apohana śakti.
limited knowledge is dominant in the world of human beings who are bound. Remembrance (smrīti) is a type of knowledge that manifests once again that which was previously folded within and therefore remains only in the form of impression. All types of knowledge could be included under these three types.

Thus, the omniscience of the creator comes along with his power of all-doership, which is nothing but his power of freedom (svātantrya). The word sarvaih should be taken to mean that all the sāstras combined describe Paramēśvara. Through the creation of the Veda and Vedānta, and through the creation of the relationship of actions and their results, the Lord creates the universe and then again dissolves that universe by making it rest in his own nature. The Lord accomplishes all of these through his power of freedom (svātantrya). Other commentators explain the word apohaṇa in the following way: “if this is not accomplished then this will follow”, and thus, giving to the meaning of this word the sense of dualism. He creates Vedānta, which is identical with his own nature and by knowing which one gains identity with Paramēśvara. The same is with the Vedas.

16. There are two Puruṣas in this world, one perishable and the other imperishable; all these existences are perishable, and the unchanging is the imperishable.

17. But other than these two is the Puruṣottama, called the highest self, who as the imperishable Lord enters the three worlds and sustains them.

18. As I am beyond the perishable and am higher even than the imperishable, I am celebrated as the Puruṣottama in the world as well as in the Vedas.
Having taken recourse in Me who is the highest reality and knowing that everything is pervaded through Me, worship Me with right knowledge, right action or in images. Worship Me in this way, till you do not see in all the objects of this world the transcendent nature of God. As I have myself said in Śiva Sakti Avinābhāva Stotra:

What is not your praise, O Mother of the Universe, who possesses all words for your body? Let there be your presence in all the objects of the world, in the creations of my mind as well as in the external expressions. O Mother, meditating in this way, O Pacifier of inauspiciousness, one realizes that all that exists in this universe comes without any effort on your part. (Therefore), there is no moment in time in which I am not engaged in remembering you, repeating your names, worshipping you or meditating on you.

20. Thus has this most secret knowledge been taught by Me, O Blameless One; having realized this knowledge a man becomes wise and accomplishes everything that is to be accomplished, O Bhārata.
However, in the introduction it was stated that there was conflict between knowledge and ignorance in the disguise of gods and demons. Although the intention was to describe the nature of a student, the Lord will add some additional explanations. As a result, two more chapters will be added. However, the instruction ends at this point. All that is to be attained is unification with God. The process of achievement of this goal has already been explained. The highest good is the union with Parameswara, who is the highest reality.

अथ संग्रहलोकः:

हल्ला हैतमहमोहां कुल्ला ब्रह्मायर्यिं चिति म।
लोकोक्ते व्याहरेरथि सृजनिति संपाविशेषं। १५।।

SUMMARY VERSE:

The sage who has transcended the great delusion caused by the notion of duality and who has realized his consciousness as being pervaded by the Brahman, that wise man even while performing worldly activities should permanently remain absorbed in the highest reality.

इति श्रीमहामहेश्वराचार्यवर्त्यराजानकाभिनवजगुमपादविविचिते
श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतार्थसंग्रहं पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः। १५।।

अथ घोडळोऽध्यायः:

CHAPTER 16

एतद्वेवेवतुकृम्। बोधक्ष नाम, श्रुतिमयज्ञानतः। ‘ददमित्यथम्’—
इसेंवेवपुरुष्कित्रित्ताभवायमयज्ञानोददेहै
विचारविक्षणंसरस्यादिदृष्टेण
विज्ञातात्मकाविविहितात्मज्ञानायस्वभक्ति, प्रभवति।
यद्यि—

‘विमुख्येवमयज्ञानं वयेच्छसि तथा कुरु’। (१८ अ। १६ रवी।)

इति। तत्र श्रुतिमि ज्ञाने गुरुशास्त्रे एव प्राधायणेन प्रभवति। युक्तिकित्ताभवायमि तु
विमुख्येवमयज्ञानं असाधारणं शिष्यगुणसंपूतं प्रभवति॥।

इति भविष्यते वर्त्यराजायं ‘विमुख्येवम्’—इति वाक्यं सविष्यतं करु परिकरवम्
गोजनाभिप्रायं भवगयानुसू।—

It was stated in the last verse of the previous chapter, “Having realized this knowledge a man becomes wise and accomplishes everything that is to be accomplished.” The question that arises here is: What is the nature of this knowledge that the wise man becomes aware of, and how is it realized? The realization of this knowledge takes place after one is first instructed into the scriptural knowledge. Then (as a result of this instruction), one realizes the nature of reality through right reasoning (vicāra), reflection (vīmāra) and meditation (parāmāra). Finally, one attains right knowledge (vijñāna), which is the result of continuous meditation on the highest reality and which is free from all other (wrong) teachings (vijñātya) as well as disrespect for these other teachings. As it will be said in chapter 18, verse 63.

“Having thoroughly analyzed this, do as you please.”

107 The knowledge (bodha) received through the sāstric teaching, reasoning, etc., is right knowledge (vijñāna). However, the feeling that one possesses right knowledge could create dislike or even hatred for other teachings (vijñātya nyakkarā). This is also to be avoided.
Therefore, the śāstras and a competent teacher play a dominant role in attaining a scriptural type of knowledge (śrutimaya). In regard to reasoning, contemplation, and meditation, the primary importance lies in the capability of the student to have the ability of reflection as well as the overall capabilities of a student. The Lord recognized these qualities (to be) in Arjuna. Therefore, in order to make his statement, “Having thoroughly analyzed, do as you please” purposeful, as well as to make Arjuna roll up his sleeves and fight,

The Lord said:

1. Fearlessness, purity of the internal sense organs, determination in the practice of yoga, knowledge, charity, control of the sense organs, sacrifice, study of the scriptures, austerity and simplicity,

2. Non-violence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault-finding, compassion to living beings, freedom from lust, gentleness, modesty and thoughtfulness,

3. Vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, satisfaction, absence of hatred and excessive pride; these, O Bhārata, are the qualities of he who is born with a divine nature.

4. Hypocrisy, arrogance, excessive pride, anger, as also harshness and ignorance; these, O Pārtha, are the qualities of him who is born with a demonic nature.

5. The divine qualities are considered conducive to liberation and the demonic to bondage. Do not grieve, O Pāṇḍava, for you are born with divine qualities.

Undoubtedly, ignorance is made of demonic particles or elements and is of the nature of tāmas. Ignorance is best controlled by increase of knowledge, which is made of divine particles. This is the nature of reality. You, Arjuna, have attained these sattvic, divine particles of which knowledge is made. Therefore, having discarded the ignorance present within you, which is nothing but delusion, carry out the injunction of the śāstras. This will prove fatal for your enemies, who are the products of external ignorance. This is how the Lord opens this chapter.

The characteristic marks of divine particles are clearly expressed with words such as: dama, which is control of the senses; non-fickleness (acāpalam), that is to say absence of fickleness (cāpalam), which
is defined as an impulse to go into action without thinking of the possible results of that action; vigor (tejas) is rejecting limitations by getting excited about something. These divine particles are for the purpose of your liberation because they are instrumental in eradicating desire.

Therefore, do not be overwhelmed with sorrow and do not think, “How will I attain happiness if I kill my relatives, etc.?” The rest (of these five verses) is clear and does not require further commentary.

6. There are two types of beings existing in the world, the divine and the demonic. The divine have been described in detail. Hear from Me, O Partha, about the demonic.

एषा दैवी संपदूका ‘अभयमित्यादिना’। आसुरीमाह

So far divine qualities such as fearlessness (abhayam) etc., have been described in detail. Next, the Lord will describe the characteristics of demonic nature.

प्रवृतिं च निवृतिं च जना न विदुरासुराः।
न शौचं नापि चाचाचारे न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते॥ ७ ॥

7. The demonic do not know from where this universe emerges or into what it will dissolve. Neither cleanliness, nor right conduct, nor truth is to be found in them.

प्रवृति: — कृतं इदंसुपरमिति। निवृति:: — क प्रलीयते इति॥ ७ ॥

The word pravṛtti here means the beginning of creation and the word nirvṛtti means the end of creation. Therefore, those who possess demonic nature do not know from where this universe emerged and into what it will dissolve.

अस्त्यमप्रवृत्तिः ते जगदाधुरनीस्वरम्।
अपरस्यसमभूतपूर्वकं चतुर्मेतुकम्॥ ८॥

8. They say that the world is without truth, without basis, without the Lord, that it is born from mutual union, that it does not exist beyond sensory perception and that it is without cause.

नं किंचिद् दुःखाद्यतं कार्यं विद्यते यात्रे तत्—अकिन्चित्कम्॥ ८॥

The word akiñcikam indicates that there is nothing beyond that which can be directly perceived, i.e., nothing beyond sensory perception.

एतां दुष्टिमवष्ठ्यं नश्यात्मानोस्त्यबुद्धिः।
प्रभवत्युपन्धरं: क्षयाय जगतो:शुभः॥ ९॥

9. Holding to this view, these lost souls of little intelligence, of fierce deeds and impurity, come forth for the destruction of the world.

काममामश्रितं दुष्युरं दश्मभानमदानविताः।
असदवहारिः: कूरा: प्रचरन्त्यशुचिबिताः॥ १०॥

10. Hypocrites, full of greed and arrogance, giving themselves up to insatiable desires, these cruel people of impure resolve, holding wrong views, move uselessly in this world.

विनतापमपरिश्रावं च प्रलयानात्मायामश्रिताः।
कामोपथोगपनसा एताविदितं निन्दितः॥ ११॥

11. Obsessed with extreme anxiety, which can only end at the time of dissolution, looking upon the fulfillment of desires as their highest aim, convinced that this is all;
15. Who is there equal to me? I am wealthy and of noble birth, I will sacrifice, give gifts and rejoice; they think in this way deluded by ignorance.

अनेकचित्ता विभ्रान्ता मोहस्ये वशः गता:।
प्रसक्ता: कामभोगनेन निरन्तः निरवेशशुचीः॥ १६॥

16. Overwhelmed by many thoughts, under the sway of delusion and attached to the fulfillment of desires, they fall into an impure hell.

अनेकचित्ता इति—निष्क्रियावातः। अशुची निर्यये—अवैधायाः, जन्म—मरणसंतोषे च॥ १६॥

They are overwhelmed by many thoughts because they have an indecisive intellect. Therefore, they fall in a horrible hell, such as avīcī, and are incapable of stopping the cycle of births and deaths.

आतससम्भाविता: स्तब्धा धनमानमदाबिनिता:।
यजनेतान्यजनेत्रते द्वेषनाविध्यूतकम॥ १७॥

17. Self-centered, stubborn, filled with the pride and arrogance of wealth, they perform sacrifices for the purpose of gaining name with ostentation and without regard to rules.

अहस्तारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः।
मामात्माप्रदेशेण प्रश्रिष्टंतोभ्यूपकक:॥ १८॥

18. Given over to egoism, power and arrogance and also to desire and anger, these malicious people despise me who dwells in their bodies as well as in the bodies of others.

यस्येवज्ञनान् नाम—निष्क्रियावात्॥ क्रोधेन हि सर्वं नवयात्तिक्षं च। यद्वा।
नामायन:—संज्ञामात्रेण ये स्मरति:॥ अथवा। नामर्थ:—प्रतिष्ठाय ये स्मर:॥ येन
‘सत्यवाण्यम्’ इति व्यवदेश: जायते॥ ते दस्यपूर्वका एव, नतु फलान्ति॥
The expression, 'they perform sacrifice' (vajña: vajante nāma) could be interpreted in the following way: Although people of demonic nature perform sacrifices, their sacrifices do not bear any fruit because their anger destroys all of their merit.

Or, the same expression could be interpreted to mean that they perform sacrifice in name only or for the sake of gaining name, i.e., fame for themselves. (And) as a result of such sacrifice they gain reputation as “those who perform sacrifices”. These kinds of sacrifices are burdened with hypocrisy and therefore bear no fruits.

These people of demonic nature, as a result of anger, show enmity towards other people and therefore, to me as well. They show enmity towards me, because I, Vāsudeva, am present in all living beings.

19. These cruel haters, lowest of men, I throw constantly only into impure demonic wombs in the cycle of births and deaths.

20. Thrown into demonic wombs, deluded birth after birth, not finding Me, O Kaunteya, they sink into even lower depths.

Showing enmity to the ātman is the worst enemy of these people. This kind of behavior is the cause of their fall into hell. Therefore, I give them low birth in the next life.

21. Threefold is the gate of this hell leading to the ruin of the soul: desire, anger and greed. Therefore, these three should be abandoned.

You should give up desire, anger, and greed because these are the open door to hell.

22. The man who is liberated from these three gates leading to darkness, O Son of Kuntī, does what is best for his soul and then reaches the highest state. Do not think that this teaching is merely human and therefore it could be disregarded. The authority of this teaching is based on the sāstras of ancient times.

23. But he who discards sāstric injunctions and acts as his desires prompt him, he does not attain either perfection or happiness or the highest goal.
24. Therefore, the scriptures should be your authority in determining right and wrong action. Knowing the scriptural injunction, you should act in this world.

Those people, who disregard the śāstric injunctions and follow their own minds in deciding what is right and what is wrong action, undoubtedly fall into hell.

Therefore, do not use your own mind to decide whether you will fight with your enemies or not.

**Atr sangha-lok:**

अथ संग्रहस्तोकः

अथोद्ध साधुपद्येत्व कार्यः नैव बिचार्येत्।

कित्वृत्ति साधुकविधिः साधु बोधिविधेनम्।

**SUMMARY VERSE:**

At the time of indecision one should not use one’s own mind to decide the course of action, but rather should rely on the śāstras whose purpose is to increase knowledge.

**अथ समदशौद्याय:**

CHARTER 17

अर्जुने उवाच

ये साधुविधिमुस्त्रिः वर्तन्ते स्रव्यायान्विताः।

tेषां नियता कुः कृष्ण सत्त्वाहो रजस्तत्माः।

Arjuna said:

1. Those, who neglecting the injunction of the śāstras, act on their own accord but are still full of faith, what is their condition, O Kṛṣṇa? Is it one of sattva, rajas or tāmas?

ंश्विधिभिन्याच्याय ये व्यवहारार्म्भिन्यात, तेषां का गतिरित्व प्रसः।

तद्न्याचः स्रव्यायान्विते श्रीभगवता—

Arjuna wants to know what is the position of those who do not follow the śāstric injunctions but act on their own accord.

The answer that the Lord gives is according to faith (śraddha).

श्रीभगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावता।

सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति ततः: श्रृणु।

The Lord said:

2. The faith of the embodied beings is of three kinds, born of their nature; it is sattvic, rājasic or tāmasic. Hear now about it.
The whole Veda is the (first) source of the sacred law, next the tradition and the virtuous conduct of those who know the (Veda further), also the customs of holy men, and (finally) self-satisfaction.  

It is the very nature of the śāstras to discriminate between good and bad actions, and therefore the śāstras are capable of providing instruction, which is conducive either to one’s prosperity or destruction.

However, one who possesses a soft heart because of the abundance of sattva, such a person spontaneously acts in accordance with the śāstric injunctions. Others, on the other hand, are not capable of following the śāstric injunctions on account of impurities created by rajas and tamas, even if intent on following them. This is to say, that they are not capable of following them through in their entirety. Only those who possess sāttvic nature can successfully follow the śāstric injunctions. As it is said in the śāstras:

Only he whose hands, feet and mind are fully controlled, who possess right knowledge, right conduct and merit accumulated through performance of austerities, is fit to attain the fruit of visiting holy places.

It is said that others are not fit because they lack self-control. The purport of this chapter is to point out that the śāstras can be efficient only if and when one is rid of desire, anger and confusion. This explanation should be sufficient for the understanding of this chapter. However, I continue to write in order to avoid inconsistencies in the reading of the Gitā’s text.

The śāstras are, indeed, devoid of bias towards any particular viewpoint, and are free from mean intentions. The śāstras as such are well thought out, i.e., are products of mature thinking, and bring about results through reflection on the desired object of knowledge. This takes place (spontaneously) as a result of inherent freedom of consciousness. That knowledge which is embodied in the śāstras is the knowledge of the highest reality, which is of the nature of para vāk and is the essence of pure vimarsa. Because of her unrestrained expansion, the highest reality in the form of para vāk manifests herself from within, beginning with her subtlest aspect, i.e., AUM, into the outside world, assuming the form of gross speech, such as various popular teachings. As it is said:

109 Para vāk is the supreme word and the very essence of the highest reality. She is the throbbing movement of the highest reality, which brings into existence the entire universe. On her descending path para vāk, becomes self-limited. However, she remains equally present on the highest level as well as on all the other levels of visible and invisible creation. Para vāk manifests the universe through gradual unfolding of consciousness, which from one perspective appears as four levels of speech. These four levels of speech correspond to human consciousness and language. Vaikhari, which is the fourth level of speech, is the language of human beings, which consists of letters, words, and sentences.

This is a quote from Manusmṛti, II. 6 (Translated by G. Buhler).
Food could also be divided into three groups according to the three qualities, i.e., sattva, rajas or tamas. The same is with sacrifices, austerities and charity.

7. But also the food, which is dear to all, is of three kinds. So are the sacrifices, austerities and charity. Hear now the distinction among these.

8. The food which promotes longevity, vitality, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, which is tasty, smooth, substantial and appetizing, appeals to people of sattvic nature.

9. The food that is bitter, sour, salty, excessively hot, pungent, dry and burning, causing pain, grief and diseases, is desired by the people of rajasic nature.

10. That food which is stale, tasteless, smelling, rotten, rejected and impure, causing suffering, grief and sickness, appeals to tamasic people.
11. The sacrifice which is offered observing the sāstric injunctions by those who do not desire reward and firmly believe that it is their duty to offer sacrifice, is sāttvic.

The expression ‘firmly believe’ (manas samādhyāya) refers to a fully pacified mind, which is the result of firm conviction.

12. But know that sacrifice offered in expectation of reward or for the sake of display to be rājasic, unsteady and uncertain.

Hypocrisy (dambha) is a desire by a person to be known by others in a way that he is really not.

13. That sacrifice which is contrary to sāstric injunctions, in which food is not distributed, no mantras are chanted and wealth is not given to the priest, and which is empty of faith, they regard as tāmasic.

The compound word viddhihtnam refers to a tāmasic sacrifice, which is not performed in accordance with the sāstric injunctions.

14. Worship of the gods, of the brāhmaṇas, of the preceptors and learned ones, cleanliness, simplicity, chastity and non-violence; this is said to be the austerity of the body.

The word ārjavam means sincerity, straightforwardness or simplicity.

15. Speech that does not offend, which is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and regular study of the Vedas; this is said to be the austerity of speech.

The word truthful (satya) is best explained by the word priyahita. Truthful speech is that speech which is sweet or dear (priya) at the moment when it is said, and which is beneficial (hita) at the later time. This kind of statement is called truth (satya) and not necessarily the statement that describes matters as they develop.

16. Peace of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, purity of heart; this is called austerity of mind.

The expression ‘peace of mind’ (manomatiḥ) means peace of mind.
The word bhāva means the intention present in people's hearts. Therefore, the expression, bhāva sūddhi refers to one whose heart is pure.

17. This threefold austerity performed with utmost faith by integrated men free from desire for the fruits of action, they regard as sāttvic.

18. The austerity performed for the sake of show in order to gain respect, honor and reverence is said to be rājasic, unsteady and uncertain.

19. The austerity performed with wrong understanding, with self-torture or with the aim of destroying others, is said to be tāmasic.

Faith (śraddhā) is also present in these three-fold austerities (tapas). Austerities dominated by sattva are pervaded by sāttvic faith. Austerities dominated by rajas possess rājasic faith, as for example hypocrisy. Austerities dominated by tamas possess tāmasic faith, as for example destruction of one's enemies. As we can see in the last three verses, sage Vyāsa wanted to point out that the three-fold austerities (tapas) are always accompanied by three-fold faith.

20. The charity which is done with the thought, "It is my duty to give", which is given to one from whom no favor is expected, which is given in the proper place and time to a worthy person, that gift is held to be sāttvic.

One who sees charity (dāna) as his duty should give charity by following the śastric injunctions, as described in this verse.

21. But that charity which is given with the hope of gaining something in return, or given with a particular aim in mind, or given grudgingly, is held to be rājasic.

Charity (dāna) that is given grudgingly (parikliśtam) after examining the recipient (of that charity) for a long time, as well as charity given in insufficient amount, is under the influence of rajas.
Charity performed by a person dominated by *tamas* is a type of wrong act. This is because that act is performed at the wrong time, the wrong place and a gift is made to the wrong person.

In this way, the three-fold activity of worldly people has been described according to the intention or purpose that people have in their minds. This intention or purpose is dominated by one of the three *gunas*.

Now, the question arises, how do people whose intellect has transcended the *gunas* perform the acts of sacrifice, austerity and charity.

26. The word *Sat* is employed in the sense of reality and goodness; and so also, O Pārtha, the word *Sat* is uttered for praiseworthy action.

27. Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity or charity is also called *Sat*; and so also any action for such purposes is called *Sat*.

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23. *Aum Tat Sat* — this is considered to be the threefold symbol of the *Brahman*, by which, during ancient times, the *brāhmaṇas*, the Vedas, and sacrifice were created.

24. Therefore, the acts of sacrifice, charity and penance, as enjoined in the *śastras*, are always undertaken by the students of the *Brahman* with the utterance of *Aum*.

25. And with the utterance of the word *Tat*, the acts of sacrifice, austerity and various acts of charity are performed by those desiring liberation, without aiming at the fruit.
ences for no particular reason, i.e., without aiming at the fruit. Prasāhya is the type of activity which follows śāśtric injunctions and is socially acceptable. The word bhavopahata refers to actions performed with the mind made impure by its association with the three guṇas, which are instrumental in binding. Therefore, actions such as acquiring property should be performed till one remains living in this world. And these actions should be performed for the sake of sacrifice.

Or, by the word Aum it is meant the fully pacified nature of the Brahman in which the entire universe rests. The word Tat expresses the aspect of the Brahman when that Brahman assumes the form of Freedom (svātantrya) in which the unfolding waves of the universe exist only as the intense awareness (parāmarśa) of all that inwardly exists in that Brahman. The word Sat stands for the fully developed aspect of the Brahman, who for its manifestation takes recourse to his power of Freedom (svātantrya) and Will (icchāsakti). Although fully perfect and complete in itself, the Brahman takes on the form of the universe because of its extraordinary nature. For this reason it is stated in verse 26 that the word Sat could be used in the sense of existence and nobility (goodness).

In other words, we can say that in the first place, the fully pacified form of the Brahman is presented. Second, the unfoldment of that Brahman is presented, which takes place as a result of contact with the waves of Will (icchā) in the form of desire to give (dītsā), to sacrifice (viyakṣa), and to perform austerity (titapā). Lastly, its fully manifested form, dominated by the variety of worldly activities such as charity (dāna), sacrifice (yajña) and austerities (tapas) is presented. However, (although apparently different) all these three aspects are in reality equal forms of the one undivided Brahman. Having this in mind (to) whom, what, how, where from, where and by whom any fruit of action could possibly come.

Next, the Lord will point out that any sacrifice (action) performed without faith and therefore being of tāmasic nature will never bear fruit. The only result coming out of such a sacrifice will be exhaustion caused by the effort of collecting all the necessary instruments for performing the sacrifice.

112 A brāhmaṇa should study the Vedas only for the study’s sake.

113 On this level, the universe exists only as an idea of all that will later come into existence.
अथ अग्रवध्यायः

CHAPTER 18

अर्जुन उक्तः सत्मात्सर्वसंज्ञास्य महाभाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम।
त्यागस्य च हृषीकेशो पुष्करेशिनिंधुतन।

Arjuna said:
I desire, O Mighty-armed, to know the true nature of renunciation (saṁyāsa) and abandonment (tyāga), O Hṛṣīkeśa, as well as the difference between the two, O Keśiniśūdana.

ूर्युऽम् ‘स त्यागी स च बुद्धिमान्’ इति। तथा ‘स संज्ञासी च योगी च न
निर्मिति’, इत्यादि। अतस्याग्निग्राहसिद्धी: श्रवणात् विशेषज्ञाताः
प्रस्तो: || 11

अःन्रातः—

It was stated in chapter 2, verse 50, “He is a true tyāgi and a wise man”. It was also stated, in chapter 6, verse 1, “He is a saṁyāsī and a yogin, not he who has renounced his household fires”. Therefore, having heard the word tyāgi and saṁyāsī, Arjuna raised this question in order to learn the difference between the two.

In the following verse the Lord answers this question.

श्रीभगवान्वच

कामयाना कर्मणा त्यागं संन्यासं कश्चन विदुः।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुऽस्यां विचार्यां: || 21

The Lord said:
2. By saṁyāsa, the wise understand the giving up of actions prompted by desire; the abandonment of the fruits of all actions they describe as tyāga.
The action prompted by desire (kāmyānam) is that kind of action which comes as a result of desire, as for example agnīstoma. Tyaṅga is then giving up of the fruits of all actions such as the obligatory duties (nitiya) as well as the ordinary duties (naimitta), while remaining engaged in their performance. All the important points that deserved explanation in this chapter, have already been explained by the revered Bhāṭṭa Bhāskara, as well as other commentators. What could be the purpose of a repetition of what they have already explained? I however, am concerned only with carrying out my own resolve (in writing this commentary), which is limited to explaining the parts of the text containing esoteric secrets. 

Next, the Lord presents various theories in order to come to one decisive conclusion in this matter.

3. “Action should be given up as an evil”, say some learned men. Others declare that acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity are not to be given up.

114 Bhāvānā is a technical term in the Mīmāṃsā philosophical system, which is usually defined as the activity of an agent conducive to the creation of that which is to come into existence. Bhāvānā has three constituent elements. First is the aim, i.e., that which is to be accomplished. Second are the instruments by means of which that aim is to be accomplished. Third is the process or manner in which this particular aim is to be accomplished. This third constituent element of bhāvānā is called itikartavyātā.

115 The general rule is always successfully contradicted by a particular one.

116 Śyena sacrifice is a type of sacrifice performed for the purpose of the destruction of one’s enemies.
5. Acts of sacrifice, charity, and austerity are not to be abandoned, but should be performed because sacrifice, charity, and austerity bring purification to the wise.

6. But these actions should be performed while abandoning attachment and desire for their fruits. This, O Pārtha, is My decided and final conclusion.

7. Truly, the renunciation (saṁnyāsa) of any duty that ought to be performed is not right. The abandonment (tyāga) of it through delusion is declared to be of the nature of tāmas.

8. He who gives up a duty because it is painful or from fear of physical suffering, performs only tyāga of the rājasic type and does not gain the reward of that tyāga.

9. But he who performs action as his duty, abandoning attachment as well as the fruit, this type of abandonment is regarded as one of sattva.

10. The wise man who is a tyāga, whose nature is dominated by sattva and whose doubts are destroyed, such a yogin is not attached to favorable action or doesn’t feel aversion to less favorable action.

11. It is undoubtedly impossible for anyone to be bound to abandon activity altogether. But he who gives up the fruit of action, he is said to be a true tyāga.
10. Threefold is the fruit of action, pleasant, unpleasant and mixed, accrued after death by those who have not abandoned desire for the results of actions; there is none whatsoever for those who have renounced.

In the course of performing ordinary worldly activities there are five causes responsible for the accomplishment of any particular act. However, people who are blinded by ignorance superimpose on their own atman responsibility for performing actions, and therefore bind themselves with their own intellect. However, the Lord explains that in reality there is no such bondage.

The word kṛtānta has the same meaning as the word siddhānta. The word siddhānta means philosophical theory, i.e., that in regard to which the conclusion has been reached.
By the word *adhiṣṭhāna* objects are meant. By the word *daiva* good and bad deeds (merit and demerit) earned in previous lives are indicated. These five causes, *adhiṣṭhāna*, etc., (assembled together) are required for the accomplishment of any action.

Others, however, in somewhat stretched language, explain that operational (active) *rajas* existent in the mind, by means of which all acts are performed, is called *adhiṣṭhāna*. This active *rajas* is expressed by the word *karmayoga* when it is transformed into five forms: satisfaction (*dhrīti*), faith (*śraddhā*), happiness (*sukha*), desire to know (*vividiṣā*) and absence of desire to know (*avividīṣā*). The doer (*kāraṇa*) is the function of the intellect (*buddhi*) that aims at the fruit of action. The instruments (*karaṇa*) are the mind, and the sense organs, etc., as well as external instruments such as swords, etc. The word ‘activity’ (*ceṣṭā*) refers to the activities of *prāṇa*, *apāna*, etc. The word ‘providence’ (*daiva*) stands for merit and demerit, into which (*daiva*) all other states of the mind are included.

Yet others, however, argue that the word *adhiṣṭhāna* stands for God (Īśvara) and that the word *akṛtabuddhi*, occurring in verse 16, stands for indecisive intellect. However, one who is free from the feeling of egoism and whose mind is purified in many different ways such as reasoning, etc., is not bound because of possessing decisive intellect.

The expression *karmacodana* means the impulse to act. At the time when desire for action arises, those who are in deep ignorance see the difference between the object of knowledge, the process of knowledge and the knower, as thought in the *sāstras*. These people (expecting the fruits of actions) think in the following way, “I will enjoy this object, because I am the performer of actions”. At the time of the completion of the action, these ignorant people also see the difference between the instrument of action, the agent and the action. However, yogins do not see the difference between action, the instrument and the doer and therefore, are not attached to action, but to knowledge.

Next, the Lord will describe the division of these six (knowledge, object of knowledge and knower as well as instruments of action, action and doer) based on the influence of the three *guṇas*.

19. In the science of the *guṇas*, knowledge, action and the agent are said to be of three kinds, according to differences in the *guṇas*. Therefore, listen duly to these also.

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Now you listen to the Sāṁkhya theory where knowledge, etc., is described as being of a three-fold nature. By the word knowledge it is suggested that there are two types of instruments, one for attaining jñāna and the other for performing kriyā. In the same way, the word karman refers to both the object of knowledge and the object of action. The word kartā indicates the knower and doer.

Therefore, in the three verses beginning with 'sarvabhūtesu' the triple form of knowledge and the instruments of knowledge are described. This is the reason why in verse 20 the relative pronoun yat is used in instrumental case. By this verse the general nature of the instruments of gaining knowledge is expressed.

By the three verses beginning with 'niyata', it is said that action (karman) is of two kinds, i.e., in the form of the object of knowledge and the object of action. In the three verses beginning with 'muktasanga', it is suggested that kartā is of two kinds, i.e., the knower and the doer.

Furthermore, the three-fold nature of the instruments (karana) as dependent on the three-fold nature of knowledge will be described. This three-fold nature has already been explained. However, as the instruments (karana) are connected to itikartavyatā (which in verses 14, 15, 16 and 17 was described to be five-fold), the question arises how the five-fold nature of itikartavyatā could be justified. This question is answered in the following way: As faith (śraddhā), has already been described, and the desire to know (vividishā) and the absence of desire to know (avividishā) could be reduced to satisfaction (dhṛtyā) and happiness (sukha) respectively, we get the three-fold nature of itikartavyatā, i.e., satisfaction (dhṛtyā), happiness (sukha), and faith (śraddhā). The three-fold nature of happiness (sukha) and satisfaction (dhṛtyā) is described in the verses beginning with 'Dhṛtyā yaya' and 'Sukha tu idam'.

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117 Verses 20-22 of this chapter.
118 Verses 23-25 of this chapter.
119 Verses 26-28 of this chapter.
120 Itikartavyatā is part of bhāvanā. See note 114.
121 See commentary on the verse 29 of this chapter.
122 Verses 33-35 of this chapter.
123 Verses 36-38 of this chapter.
The word *ahetukam* means acting without thinking about the consequences of that act. The knowledge which is under the influence of anger and passion because of being dominated by attachment, is described as a *tāmasic* type of knowledge.

23. The action enjoined by the śāstras which is performed without attachment, without love or hate, by one undesirous of the fruit, that is said to be *sāttvic*.

24. The action which is performed by one who seeks to bring fulfillment for his desires, is impelled by the sense of egoism and is carried out with great strain, is said to be of the nature of *rajas*.

25. That action which is undertaken as a result of attachment, without regard for the consequences, destruction and injury, and without competence, is said to be of the nature of *tamas*.

The word *mohā* here means attachment.

26. That doer is said to be of *sāttvic* nature who is free from attachment and sense of egotism, full of firmness and enthusiasm, unmoved by success or failure.

One who does not claim to be a doer (*karta*), that is to say, one who possesses that nature or one who is like that by nature (*tacchilaḥ*). Or one who possesses that kind of quality (*taddharmā*). Or one who acts accordingly (*sādhuḥḥārta*). However, the suffix *in*, in the word yogin indicates that it is not forbidden for a yogin to claim, “I am a doer (*karta*) of this action” in practical life, which is dominated by ignorance.

27. That doer is said to be of *rajasic* nature who is swayed by passion, desirous of the fruits of actions, greedy, violent, impure, and moved by joy and sorrow.
28. That doer is said to be of tāmasic nature who is unrestrained, vulgar, stubborn, deceitful, merciless, lazy, despondent and procrastinating.

The word nikrti means mercilessness, lack of compassion.

29. Hear now the threefold distinction of intellect and satisfaction (dṛṣṭi), O Winner of Wealth, according to the guṇas, as it is elaborated fully and distinctively.

Buddhi is responsible for determinative knowledge. The word dṛṣṭi means satisfaction (saṁtosa). All people, after completing either good or bad acts, think, “I finished what I needed to do, why should I do anything else? What could I gain by performing any other activity?” Otherwise, what could be the reason for stopping the performance of activities? Therefore, the purport is that satisfaction is present in everyone. I intend to explain only those words whose meaning is not well known.

30. The intellect which knows the nature of action and non-action, what is to be done and what is not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, the nature of bondage and liberation, is considered to be of sāttvic nature.

31. That intellect, which is mistaken in its knowledge of dharma and adharma, of what is to be done and what is not to be done, O Pārtha, possesses rajas nature.
34. That dhṛti by means of which one holds fast to dharma, pleasure and wealth, desiring the fruit without much concern, possesses rājasic nature.

The rājasic person does not desire fruits with such great intensity or emphasis. Rather he expects fruits without too much concern, by the way (prasangena).

35. That dhṛti by which a foolish person does not give up sleep, fear, sorrow, depression, and pride, is considered to be of the nature of tamaṣ.

When the tamaṣic type of dhṛti is dominant, one finds satisfaction in sleeping and an unorganized life style.

36. And now hear from Me, O Best of the Bharatas, the three guna kinds of happiness (sukha), in which one rejoices through practice and in which one reaches the end of his sorrow.

37. That happiness which is like poison at the time of practice and like nectar at a later time, which is born from the clear understanding of the self, is said to be of sattvic nature.

38. That happiness, which arises from the contact of the senses and their objects and which is like nectar at the beginning but like poison at the end, is known to be rājasic.

The happiness born from the meeting between the sense organs and their objects, such as eye and form, is the rājasic type of happiness.

39. That happiness, which deludes the soul both at the beginning and at the end and which arises from sleep, laziness and negligence, is said to be of the nature of tamaṣ.
That happiness that comes from sleep, laziness and negligence is the tāmasic type of happiness. This kind of happiness has already been explained.

न तदस्तिपुष्टिव् वा दिव देवेषु वा पुनः।
सत्तं प्रकृतिजेतुपः यदेभिः। स्मार्तिः भिषुः॥ ४०॥

40. There is no creature either on earth or in the heaven among the gods, which could possibly exist without the three guṇas born of Prakṛti.

एवं कर्त्त्वकरणां बुद्धिधृती:। सुकृतव स च सत्यादिभेदभिजानां
परस्परप्रभुर्वाहवाधिकत्वलेभुच्यात्तिकमयोगपदीयागदिपरिसंक्रेष्ये—
भद्वादिभिधिवधिभावसर्वसमकालम्। इत्यवने कर्मणि प्राकृत तुर्कित गहनान्वितां
सहिततुं निर्माताम्। सर्वं चैते देवतादिश्यावारान्ता। गुणान्वसंबंधत्य नालिकामानिः
उत्तो ति
‘आ ब्रह्माण्डकौटाण्त न कर्त्तर्वित्तत:। सुकृतव स च निश्चायविवृतः॥’

इति। तत्त्वो हि सुचु। गुणान्विक्रत्ताः। नेनये केशाश्च।। एकविश्वस्तः यथा
प्रथेकः तित्तस्य रूपं च भूचार्यात्स्य कृत्तादिः। तत्त्वतत्वाप्स्ये। रसी वर्तानां
देवीं सम्पर्द प्राय इत्य जने योगाः। च च भूमिकाः।—इत्यवने: प्राकृतत्वाः। अरुणा
विद्वद्भ्यां—यदि तत्त्वादिति जात्स्याः। तत्त्वादिति। नानव्यवस्था मूलान्तरीति। तदाः
विज्ञानन्तर्यात्स्य च क न कर्मसंवस्त्ताव।। अप्रत्येक्यादिति। तदार्थां तत्वादि
विज्ञानान्तित्वम्। जातिरेन जातिरेव सिद्धात्वम्।। यत:। सर्व:। स्वभावनित्व:।
कृत्तिः कृत्तियित्रेषोद्धितत्वाव:। कृत्तिकालं भूचार्योऽः। तत्तिरोधकः कर्मास्ति।
व्याख्यातां लभार्थाः।। एवो च तथोद्धितत्वो वर्णान्त:। स्वभाव:।।। एवमप्रवेयं भूचार्यं
प्राकृत:। तत:। फलेविभागिता भवेत्।—तदाः

Thus, agent, action, intellect (buddhi), satisfaction (dṛṣṭi) as well as happiness are divided on the basis of the three guṇas into various groups. (This division takes place) because of the three guṇas suppressing each other and therefore existing in relation of being mutually dominant and subordinate and because of the guṇas functioning simultaneously and in sequence. Therefore, it is because of these in-numerably combinations that are created as a result of these divisions that the variety of types of fruits of actions could be generated. Thus, the mysterious nature of action, which was previously briefly mentioned, has been analyzed at length and is supported by logical arguments. Therefore, all the creatures beginning with gods and ending with immovable beings are unable to rise above the influence of the three guṇas. As it is said:

All creatures beginning with Brahmā and ending with insects are in reality not happy. Each of the species of living beings, desiring to live, engages in performance of various activities.

The point here is that only the mind which has transcended the three guṇas can truly be happy. Thus, the three-fold nature of dṛṣṭi, etc., was explained one by one.

One in whom sattva (among all of these possible combinations) dominates, and therefore possesses divine qualities, is deemed ready to receive knowledge. The Lord encourages Arjuna, by pointing out that he is one who possesses these qualities.

Next, the Lord will tell Arjuna that even if he engages in waging a war he will not be bound by action. This is because he has been purified by knowledge and because of the fact that waging war is his duty. On the other hand, if Arjuna refuses to engage in the battle, he will, in one way or another, be forced to carry out his duty. The reason for this is that all the creatures unavoidably follow their nature (svabhāva). Even if one’s nature is somehow temporarily concealed as a result of an obstacle, even then after this obstacle is removed that nature will again become manifest. The same situation is with the natures of the four castes. When acts are to be invariably performed then the division of the fruits will take place.

व्रजाण्डक्षत्रियविशिष्ठं शूद्राणां च परन्तप।
कर्मणि प्रविधित्कानि स्वभावप्रभृत्विर्मणः॥ ४१॥

41. The activities of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vāsīyas as well as of sūdras, O Conqueror of the Foe, are distributed according to the guṇas arising from their nature (svabhāva).
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47. Better is one's own dharma, even if undesirable, than the dharma of another carried out perfectly. One does not incur sin when performing the duty ordained by one's own nature.

48. One should not give up the duty that goes with his nature, O Son of Kunti, though it may be defective, for all enterprises are covered by defects as fire is by smoke.

49. He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who controls his mind and who is free from desire, through renunciation attains the supreme state that transcends all activities.

50. Learn from me in brief, O Son of Kunti, how can one, after attaining perfection, realize the Brahman, the highest state of knowledge.

51. Endowed with pure intellect, firmly restraining oneself, abandoning sound and the other objects of the senses, rejecting passion and aversion,
52. Dwelling in isolated places, eating little, controlling speech, body and mind, always engaged in yoga of meditation and resorting to detachment,

अहंकार बलं दर्थ कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम्।
विमुच्य निर्ममं: शान्तो ब्रह्मभूताय कल्प्यते॥ ५३॥

53. Leaving behind the sense of egoism, force, pride, desire, anger, and possessions, without the sense that anything belongs to him and peaceful in mind, he becomes fit for union with the Brahman.

ब्रह्मभूते: प्रसवन्ता न शोचति न हृदयति॥
सम: सवृष्टः भूतेषु मद्भवं लभते पराम्॥ ५४॥

54. Having become one with the Brahman and at peace in his mind, he neither grieves nor rejoices. Perceiving all beings with a balanced mind, he attains supreme devotion to Me.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति योः प्रक्षाशिम तत्तचः॥
ततो मां तत्तचो ज्ञात्वा विशाते तदननस्य॥ ५५॥

55. Through devotion he comes to know Me, what my extent is and who I am in truth; then, having known Me in truth, he immediately merges into Me.

सर्वकमण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्यपाश्रयः॥
मत्रसादादवाप्रोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम्॥ ५६॥

56. Through continuously performing all actions and taking refuge in Me, he attains by My grace the eternal, imperishable abode.

चेतसा सर्वकमण्य मध्य संन्यस्य भारत॥
बुद्धियोगं समाधिः परिवर्तते: सत्तं भव॥ ५७॥

57. Mentally surrendering all actions to Me, regarding Me as the highest goal and taking recourse in the yoga of knowledge, fix your mind constantly on Me.

मचित्तः सर्वकमण्य मत्रां भारतातिरिसि।
अध्ये चेत्तमहायो न मोक्षसि लोकस्यसि॥ ५८॥

58. Fixing your mind on Me, you will, by My grace, cross over all difficulties; but if, through the sense of egoism, you will not listen, you will perish.

यदहारमाधिश्चत्व न चोत्स्य ईति मनः॥
मिथ्येषु व्यवसायेऽस्तु प्रकृतिः निन्योक्त्यति॥ ५९॥

59. If through the sense of egoism you think, “I will not fight”, vain is this determination, as your nature will compel you.

स्वभावजन कौशेष निष्ठ: स्वेन कर्मण:॥
कर्त्तृः नेच्छसि यमोहत्कर्मवव्यवस्याःपि ततं॥ ६०॥

60. That which, through delusion, you wish not to do, O Son of Kunti, that you will do even against your will, bound by your own acts born of your nature.
The nature (svabhāva) of the four castes, brāhmaṇas, etc., is
described according to the activity that they are meant to perform.
And that nature (svabhāva) cannot under any circumstances be trans-
gressed. Your (Arjuna’s) nature is (to perform) ksatriya (type of ac-
tivity) and although you are unwilling to perform your duty your
nature will unavoidably make you perform it. Only one who follows
the path, determined by the power of his nature (svabhāva) can gain
merit and demerit. Therefore, perform action accepting the authority
of the knowledge that was previously explained by me. If you follow
that instruction, then you will be freed from bondage. The purpose of
this great statement is to make Arjuna roll up his sleeves and engage
in the activity that is his nature. The meaning of the remaining verses
is clear and requires no commentary.

All that has previously been taught about the nature of knowl-
edge (jñāna) is once again briefly explained in simple language. Therefore,
there is no point in striving to comment on that which has
already been commented upon.

61. The Lord abides in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna,
causing all of them to revolve by His power as if they
were mounted on a machine.

62. Run to Him for shelter with your whole being, O
Bhārata. By His grace you will attain the highest peace
and the eternal abode.

63. Thus, this knowledge, more secret than all secrets,
having been explained to you by Me. Having reflected on
it in its totality, do as you please.
(vimśayaitadasesena), the meaning of this statement is that the Lord instructs Arjuna not to think about the literal meaning (of this teaching), but of the essence of it. Although I have already, at various occasions, explained the essence of this teaching, nevertheless I will explain it again clearly and in its entirety. One’s mind never tires of this knowledge even if one needs to teach it over and over again.

Now listen again to the nature of that knowledge which is described as the highest secret.

64. Listen again to My highest word, the most sacred of all. You are beloved of Me, therefore, I will tell you what will bring good to you.

65. Occupy your mind with Me; be devoted to Me; perform sacrifice to Me; salute Me; and in this way you will come to Me. I promise this to you, for you are dear to Me.

From the statement, “Occupy your mind with Me” (mānmane) it can be concluded that the most important teaching in this sästra is that one should surrender to the Brahman. Therefore, it is said that the sästras become meaningful for only those who surrender to the Brahman.

In regard to this point, the Lord further explains:

66. Abandoning all other dharmas, come to Me alone for shelter. Do not grieve, for I will relieve you from all sins.
Chapter 18

Being My devotee includes the teaching of others. One (who is My devotee) should spread among the others this teaching described in the śāstras. The Lord’s statement, “He becomes identical with Me” is not merely rhetoric but an injunction.


69. There is none among human beings who does dearer service to Me, neither will there be another dearer to Me in this world.


70. And whoever will study this righteous dialogue between the two of us, by him I will be worshipped through the sacrifice of knowledge; this is My opinion.


71. And the man who listens to it with faith without sneering, even he, being liberated, will attain the auspicious worlds of those whose deeds are meritorious.


72. O Partha, have you heard this with your mind concentrated? O Winner of Wealth, has your confusion caused by ignorance been destroyed?
Arjuna said:
73. Destroyed is my confusion, and I have, through your grace, regained memory, O Acyuta. I stand firm with my doubts dispelled. I will act following your instruction.

The fact that Arjuna used the expression, “destroyed is my confusion” (naṣṭa mohah) indicates that the readiness to fight has arisen in his mind. However, he still has not attained the complete knowledge of the Brahman. By indicating this, sage Vyāsa leaves the space open for the teachings of Anugitā, which is yet to come.

Saṅjaya said:
74. Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Vāsudeva and the great soul Pārtha, which caused my hair to stand on end.

75. I heard this highest secret by the grace of Vyāsa, this yogi taught by Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga himself.

76. O King, as I remember again and again this wonderful and meritorious dialogue between Keśava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.

77. And as I remember that most wonderful form of Hari, great is my astonishment, O King, and I rejoice again and again.

78. Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga, and Pārtha, the archer, I think there will surely be fortune, victory, wealth and righteousness.

In concluding the dialogue it is stated that the mere remembrance of this dialogue between the Lord and Arjuna grants the experience of the highest Brahman. This memory, however, comes as a result of an ordinary thought construct (vikalpa) being transformed into the clear experience of a state free from thought (nirvikalpa) which comes as a result of continuous practice. Thus, realizing the highest reality by remembering this dialogue, one attains prosperity, victory, and power.

124 The Anugitā is a section of the Mahābhārata.

125 Nirvikalpa is the state free from thought contrasts.
SUMMARY VERSE:

Whatever action might be performed by a yogin — who has freed his mind dominated by the three guṇas, which are of the nature of knowledge, confusion and inertia, and who has attained Viṣṇu, who is beyond thought, through the beauty of the realization of his own self — that action is performed effortlessly because he is engaged only in such activities of the sense organs, which arise in him on their own. To such a yogin Śiva is everything.

CONCLUDING VERSES

श्रीमद्यान्ताययमोऽभुद्वाभिमुचस्थिशः
स्ततंशालात्कृतौ, यः विश्वमतितस्वसत्वीत्सकायोऽत्विविधान।
विव: श्री भृगुराजसदनु समभवस्वय सुनुप्ताद्या
शेनामी सर्वलोकाकारसिनिनातिता: प्रोज्जता भानुङ्गी || 1 1

1. Once there was the glorious Kātyāyana resembling Vararuci, who attained fulfillment by means of the ever-pulsating consciousness; whose family was adorned by the great scholar Sauṣuka of firm intellect. Next in line was born his son brāhmaṇa Bhūṭirāja, who was a great soul. All these worlds fallen into deep darkness were once again relieved by him, just as the sun relieves the darkness existing in this world.

तथारणकलत्तवथोऽभुद्वीतार्थसंग्रहः व्यदधातः।
अविवावाम: सहितवलोककृत्वं चोदनावश्चात: || 2 1

2. I, Abhinavagupta, who like a bee have drunk the nectar (of knowledge) at his lotus like feet, have composed this Gitārthasaṁgraha, after being inspired to do so by the noble brāhmaṇa Loṭaka.

अत इदम्यथार्थं वा यथार्थम्यष्ट्रः सर्वथा नैव
विद्यामसूपतीवं कृत्यमिदं बार्थवाच्यं हि || 3 1

3. Therefore, this commentary, whether correct or incorrect, does not deserve to be disrespected by scholars because it was written for a friend.
4. There is śakti, who is ever-fresh consciousness (Abhinava), and God Maheśvara, the fullness of consciousness (Gupta), on which that śakti is based. Therefore, I salute that Śiva in the form of union of these two, which is Abhinavagupta.

or:

There is śakti, who is ever-new (consciousness) (Abhinava), and God Maheśvara, who is hidden (Gupta) by that śakti. Therefore, I salute that Śiva in the form of the union of these two, which is Abhinavagupta.

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